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De La Salle Christian Brothers' Experiences of Catholic Identity in Higher Education in the United States

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The University of San Francisco

DE LA SALLE CHRISTIAN BROTHERS' EXPERIENCES
OF CATHOLIC IDENTITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION
IN THE UNITED STATES

A Dissertation Presented
to
The Faculty of the School of Education
Department of Leadership Studies
Catholic Educational Leadership Program

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

by
Scott A. Kier
San Francisco
December 2012

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THE UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO
Dissertation Abstract

De La Salle Christian Brothers' Experiences
Of Catholic Identity in Higher Education in the United States

Catholic identity is considered to be the single most important issue facing Catholic higher education in the United States. Scholars (Burtchaell, 1998; Gallin, 1999; Gleason, 1995; Heft, 2003; Marsden, 1994; O'Brien, 1994) have suggested that sustaining Catholic identity and preventing secularization depends on the integration of the Catholic intellectual tradition with the sponsoring religious congregation. The Catholic identity often has been discussed in terms of the decreasing presence of various signs and symbols of Catholicity. Additionally, the number of Catholics among the student body, the number of required theology courses, and the role of the curriculum and faculty, have been employed as measures of Catholic identity.

This qualitative study utilized virtual research methodology to explore the De La Salle Christian Brothers' personal experiences of Catholic identity in higher education in the United States as the sponsoring congregation on their campuses. The researcher interviewed 20 Brothers from four institutions of higher education regarding their definitions of Catholic identity, their experiences of Catholic identity from an historical and current-day perspective, as well as their visions of Catholic identity in higher education in the future.

The study's findings revealed that the Brothers experienced themselves as the animators of Catholic identity at the institutions of higher education where they were assigned; that there is a need and desire for education and formation programs in the

Catholic and Lasallian traditions; that, where Catholic identity is strong, the rituals and practices of the Catholic faith are also a vital part of the religious life of the campus; that presidential leadership is critical to the Catholic identity of the institution; and, that aspects of the operations of the institution reflect a connection to Catholicism, including the Catholic composition of the student body and faculty in terms of religious affiliation, the integration of the curriculum within the Catholic intellectual tradition, and programs that support the Catholic faith tradition.

This study provided research on Catholic identity from the personal voices of the sponsoring religious congregation of institutions of higher education in the United States. With decreasing vocations in religious life and, therefore, less religious present in colleges and universities, an important segment of higher education, the voices of the sponsoring religious congregation, may be lost forever.

This dissertation, written under the direction of the candidate's dissertation committee and approved by the members of the committee, has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty of the School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education. The content and research methodologies in this work represent the work of the candidate alone.

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December 6, 2012

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DEDICATION

This doctoral dissertation is dedicated to

Kay and Dennis Urbaniak

and

Brother Donald Mansir, FSC

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A dissertation can be considered as the culmination of their doctoral journey, but I consider this work to be my thank you to all the De La Salle Christian Brothers who have made an impact on my life. With the exception of my parents and my brothers, the Christian Brothers have been a part of my life the longest. I can honestly say their impact on me has been profound.

I would first like to acknowledge and thank the Jesuit Community at the University of San Francisco (USF) for providing the Ignatian Tuition Grant. The financial support of this grant provided me the opportunity to achieve my dream of earning my doctorate at a Jesuit institution of higher education.

The Institute of Catholic Educational Leadership (ICEL) at USF was my home away from home for the last four years and the faculty and staff of ICEL are second to none. Specifically, I am appreciative of all the support and friendship afforded to me from Sarah Wannemuehler and Doreen Jones for making the Summer West experience truly special. I am extremely fortunate to consider them as my friends as well as my teachers.

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and universities and introduce myself and the study. Without these visits, I am sure I would not have received the participation of the Brothers that I did.

I am a “Brother’s Boy” and I am forever indebted to the Christian Brothers. My journey with the Brothers began in 1979 when I was a freshman at St. Joseph’s Collegiate Institute in Buffalo, NY, then professionally in Warren, MI, and now Moraga, CA. The Brothers Communities at each of these schools opened their doors to me and I am grateful for their hospitality and friendship over the years. The Brothers who I have met and have become friends with throughout my life have shaped the person who I am today. While they are too many to list, I would like to acknowledge Brothers Chris, Fred, Gerard, Michael, Peter, William, Joe, Joseph, Tom, Brice, Stan, Louis, Charles, Ronald, Richard, Dominic, and Mark.

I am sure every doctorate student considers their dissertation committee the best, but I will put mine up against anyone’s and I am confident I am correct with my assertion. Dan McPherson and Father Steve Katsouros provided wisdom, counsel, and invaluable feedback throughout the proposal and writing process. I appreciated their accessibility to answer questions as well as their flexibility when my proposal defense date changed a couple of times. I am especially grateful that I had the opportunity to have Gini Shimabukuro as my advisor. I was extremely fortunate to have someone as thoughtful, caring, and understanding as Gini with me throughout this journey. I am going to miss our technology conversations but look forward to coffee in Alameda.

Shortly after my pre-proposal meeting with my dissertation committee, I lost a member of my committee, Brother Donald Mansir. More than just a committee member, Donald was my friend, mentor, counselor, and spiritual advisor. It is unfortunate that he

left too soon, but I know he was at my side throughout the writing and still accompanies me on my life's journey.

My final acknowledgment goes to my parents and my family. Mom and Dad, a thank you does not even begin to convey how grateful I am to you for helping me and being there throughout the journey. You nudged me along, encouraging me to remain focused and to complete this degree, while life continued on. A special thanks also goes to my family for accepting that "I have class" or that "I have to write" as an excuse for not being present at events or not traveling as much as I would have liked. Time to make up for lost time!

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CHAPTER I

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem

Scholars (Burtchaell, 1998; Gallin, 1999; Gleason, 1995; Heft, 2003; Marsden, 1994; O'Brien, 1994) raised the question: Will Catholic institutions eventually lose their distinctive identity and become secular? Many scholars have suggested that sustaining Catholic identity and preventing secularization depends upon the integration of the Catholic intellectual tradition and the tradition of the sponsoring religious congregation (Buckley, 1998; Cernaro & Morgan, 2000, 2002; Curran, 1997; Gallin, 1999, 2000, 2002; Hayes, 2000b; Heft, 2003; Hellwig, 1997, 2000a, 2002a; Hesburgh, 1994; John Paul II, 1990; Langan, 2000; O'Brien, 1994, 1997; Steinfels, 2003).

Additionally, the pursuit of academic excellence and other values of American higher education, as well as the changes in the Catholic Church as the result of the Second Vatican Council, have made the promotion of Catholic identity more complex and challenging. The extent of this challenge was typified by Gleason (1995) who claimed that American Catholic higher education faces a crisis: "The crisis is not that Catholic educators do not want their institutions to remain Catholic, but that they are no longer sure what remaining Catholic means" (p. 320). Daley (1993) asserted that the issue of Catholic identity is the "most gnawing, and elusive question facing Catholic universities today" (p. 7). In fact, Catholic identity is considered to be the single most important issue facing Catholic higher education in the United States (Allen, 1999; Daley, 1993; Gleason, 1992, 1995; Introcaso, 1996; Janosik, 1996; Morey & Piderit, 2006; O'Brien, 1994).

Philip Gleason (1992), a professor at the University of Notre Dame and a noted historian of 20th century American Catholic higher education, commented on the identity crisis issue:

In one sense the amount of explicit attention devoted to the subject is in itself a significant response, for what it indicates is the recognition that something formerly taken for granted now has to be addressed as a problem requiring self-conscious and systematic attention. (p. 249)

Some historians in the Catholic Church and in Catholic higher education have questioned whether Catholic colleges and universities have become too secular (Burtchaell, 1998; Mardsen, 1994; Morey & Piderit, 2006). In case studies of Boston College, the College of New Rochelle, and Saint Mary's College of California, Burtchaell (1998) asserted that these schools have abandoned their calling to ministries of the Catholic Church by moving toward a less Catholic and more secular curriculum and identity. Gleason (1997) maintained that "the debate over Catholic higher education illustrates a larger cultural discourse about the changing meaning of being Catholic in the United States" (p. 26). There is concern among some conservative Catholic groups that Catholic institutions of higher education will follow the secularization path of the Protestant institutions, e.g. Harvard (Greeley, 1990; Morey & Piderit, 2006). They fear for the loss of a distinctive Catholic identity and traditions, similar to the experiences of many religious institutions that have become secularized.

In a 2003 survey of 124 administrators at 33 Catholic colleges and universities in the United States, Morey and Piderit (2006) found that 41% of religious and 26% of lay presidents acknowledged a lack of clarity about Catholic intellectual traditions and considered phrases like Catholic identity to be obscure concepts. Catholic identity often has been discussed in terms of the decreasing presence of various signs and symbols of

Catholicity. Trend analysis on the number of the founding religious groups present on governing boards or among the faculty (Galvin, 1971; Maloney, 1973, Sullins, 2004), the number of Catholics among the student body (Maloney, 1973), the number of required theology courses (Maloney, 1973), or the number of liturgical opportunities available for Catholic formation (Lucey, 1978) have been employed as measures of Catholic identity. Others have discussed the role of the curriculum and the faculty in the Catholic identity of the institution (Hehir, 1993; Holtschneider & Morey, 2000; Kennedy, 1992; Lyon, Beaty and Mixon, 2002) and Janosik (1996) presented a synthesis of the wide variety of views on what Catholic identity means.

Morey and Piderit (2006) noted that the disappearance of nuns, brothers, and priests, would “drive Catholic institutions to make changes to assure the vitality of their Catholic identity” (p. 7). Additionally, Morey and Piderit went so far as to claim that the loss of nuns, brothers, and priests as a vital and visible presence on campuses may prove fatal for the institutional Catholic character (p. 3).

Today, the Christian Brothers account for only 3.3% of all full-time faculty members and 1.8% of full- and part-time professional staff in the institutions they sponsor (Christian Brothers Conference, 2012). With an aging and diminishing population of Christian Brothers present in the colleges and universities that they sponsor, the rich diversity of the experiences of the Christian Brothers regarding Catholic identity were those voices that this research intended to capture.

Background and Need

Unlike their Protestant counterparts, Catholics had neither the social nor the financial capital to support a college in the colonial days. Only when they had achieved a

critical mass through immigration did Catholics give serious thought to higher education (Power, 1958). According to Gleason (1967), the early development of Catholic education lagged behind others chronologically but, once begun with the founding of Georgetown in 1789, embraced the same general purposes as other colleges. While there may have been a remote connection to the intellectual life, the basic aims of the first Catholic colleges were to prepare boys for the priesthood, to create centers for missionary activity, and to cultivate in boys and young men the moral virtues (Power, 1958).

Catholic bishops, the leaders of the local churches, encouraged the growth of colleges, but religious congregations of priests, brothers, and sisters founded and staffed most of the institutions (Power, 1958). Georgetown and St. Louis became the first of many colleges that bore the influence of Jesuits. Historians suggested that the Jesuit influence may have been the strongest and most lasting on Catholic higher education (Gleason, 1995; Power, 1958). Currently, in the United States, the Jesuits sponsor 28 colleges and universities, the largest number of institutions connected with any sponsoring religious congregation. In contrast, the Christian Brothers sponsor six colleges and universities in the United States. Although they represented a minority and were generally not included in early studies (Haynes, 2002; Rudolph, 1968), Catholic colleges and universities currently enroll half of the students attending church-related institutions. The 2011 membership report of the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities (ACCU) included 244 Catholic degree-awarding institutions with more than 780,000 students.

De La Salle Christian Brothers

The Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, known in the United States as the Christian Brothers or, more recently, the De La Salle Christian Brothers, was founded in France in 1680 by Saint John Baptist de La Salle. Declared by Pope Pius XII to be the patron saint of those who teach young people, de La Salle wished the members of his Institute to be devoted entirely to the work of Christian education in the schools (Salm, 1996). For that reason, he made it a rule that his Brothers would never aspire to Holy Orders, and he would not even allow them to teach or study Latin (Poutet & Watson, 1997). The Brothers' mission has been "to provide a human and Christian education to the young, especially the poor, according to the ministry entrusted to them by the church" (Brothers of the Christian Schools, 2011, p. 12). The Congregation has engaged in the apostolate of educating the poor throughout its 300 year history. It is a ministry that "has the school as its setting, the teacher and the student as its focus, and the salvific potential of education as its inspiration" (Brothers of the Christian Schools, 2011, p. 4).

Prior to founding the Institute, John Baptist de La Salle was a canon of the metropolitan church of Rheims, France. In order to carry out the last will of his spiritual director, Canon Roland, he first busied himself with consolidating a religious congregation devoted to the education of poor girls (Salm, 1996). He, then, seconded the efforts of a zealous layman, Adrien Nyel, to multiply schools for poor children. Thus, he was led to create an Institute that would have no other mission than that of Christian education (Poutet & Watson, 1997).

The spirit of the Institute, infused by the example and teachings of its founder and fostered by the exercises of the religious life, is a spirit of faith and of zeal. The spirit of faith induces a Brother to see God in all things, to suffer everything for God, and above all to sanctify himself. The spirit of zeal attracts him towards children to instruct them in the truths of religion and penetrate their hearts with the maxims of the Gospel, so that they may make it the rule of their conduct. St. John Baptist de La Salle had himself given his Brothers admirable proofs of the purity of his faith and the vivacity of his zeal (Salm, 1996).

Salm (1996) noted that La Salle pointed out that the zeal of a religious educator should be exercised by three principal means: vigilance, good example, and instruction. Vigilance removes from children a great many occasions of offending God; good example places before them models for imitation; and, instruction makes them familiar with what they should know, especially with the truths of religion. Hence, the Brothers have always considered catechism as the most important subject taught in their schools. They are, therefore, in accordance with the spirit of their Institute, religious educators: as religious, they take the three usual vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience; as educators, they add the vow of teaching the poor gratuitously according to the prescriptions of their rule, and the vow of remaining in their Institute, which they may not leave of themselves even for the purpose of joining a more perfect order.

Since the founder's time, the ministry of the Brothers has extended from an almost exclusive commitment to primary schools to educational institutions and enterprises of various kinds. The original purpose of the Institute itself was the schooling of boys from working class and poor families. In the more than 300 years since its

establishment, the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools sponsors Lasallian educational institutions worldwide that range from primary education to teacher training programs to advanced institutions of higher education. The De La Salle Christian Brothers are members of a worldwide educational movement of more than 1,000 teaching establishments within which 6,000 Brothers and 100,000 Lasallian Partners teach approximately a million children, young people, and adults in 82 countries (Casa Generalizia FSC, 2012).

Catholic Identity

Whereas some institutions of higher education had been accused of being “too Catholic” in the 1950s, the charge in the 1960s was that the institutions were not Catholic enough (Hassenger, 1967). Gleason (1967) suggested that a new question based in the institution’s basic reason for existence challenged the Catholic college and university and startled the academic community. Despite concerns about quality, there had never before been doubts about why American Catholic higher education existed (Gleason, 1967; O’Brien, 1994). Gleason (1995) characterized the identity issue as an enduring problem rather than a crisis, stemming from a

...lack of consensus as to the substantive content of the ensemble of religious beliefs, moral commitments and academic assumptions that supposedly constitute Catholic identity and a consequent inability to specify what that identity entails for the practical functioning of Catholic colleges and universities. (p. 330)

In the early years of the 21st century, questions about Catholic identity persisted (Gallin, 2000; Hellwig, 2002b). According to Hellwig (2002a), a few scholars proclaimed that the era of Catholic higher education was over; some advocated for tighter ecclesiastical control. Yet, most scholars and academicians continue to “search for the basis of Catholic identity in a clearer appropriation of the Catholic intellectual tradition, a

more forthright statement of Catholic character, identity, and purpose of the institution both in words and in operational values” (Hellwig, 2002a, p. 109).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the De La Salle Christian Brothers’ personal experiences of Catholic identity in higher education in the United States as the sponsoring congregation of these campuses. With an aging and diminishing population of Christian Brothers present in the colleges and universities that they sponsor, the rich diversity of the experiences of the Christian Brothers regarding Catholic identity were those voices that this research intended to capture. Initially, the researcher explored the Brothers’ personal characterizations of Catholic identity. Then, this study examined the Brothers’ personal experiences of Catholic identity in higher education from an historical, as well as a current day, perspective. Finally, the researcher invited the Brothers to envision the future of Catholic identity in higher education. For this qualitative study, the researcher utilized virtual research. The virtual research allowed the researcher to include the experiences of the Christian Brothers assigned to various institutions of higher education in the United States sponsored by the Brothers.

Theoretical Rationale

Considered one of the leading approaches to qualitative research, grounded theory (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Padgett, 2004; Shank, 2002) was first articulated by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss in 1967. Glaser and Strauss (1967) described their method succinctly as “...the discovery of theory from data systemically obtained from social research” (p. 2). Originally, the authors advocated the discovery, rather than the verification of theory.

Gradually, Glaser and Strauss moved in different directions and other researchers further nuanced their original work; however, Glaser, Strauss and Corbin remained the predominant voices in the grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2000, 2002; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Ryan & Bernard, 2000; Shank, 2002). Strauss became primarily associated with Julien Corbin whose background was nursing science. Their methodology moved to a behaviorist rather than an interpretist position. According to Charmaz (2000), Glaser criticized Strauss and Corbin for forcing data and for stressing the verification rather than the generation of theory.

A brief summary of the constructivist approach articulated by Charmaz (2000) will explain the way in which grounded theory was used in this study. Charmaz, described by Strauss and Corbin (1997) as an “extremely skilled researcher who has always used grounded theory in her highly regarded work” (p. 35), maintained that the work of both Glaser and Strauss and Corbin rested on a foundation of positivistic objectivism. She contended that these originators of grounded theory assumed that there is an objective, external reality and that researchers maintain distance from the reality, accessing it and writing about it as “distant experts” (p. 153). The researcher’s perspective is not part of the meaning-making process; the researcher does not necessarily probe for “views and values” and the multiple meanings and perspectives underneath what is viewed and heard (Charmaz, 2000, p. 525). In contrast,

A constructivist grounded theory recognizes that the viewer creates the data and ensuing analysis through interaction with the viewed. Data do not provide a window on reality. Rather, “discovered” reality arises from the interactive process and its temporal, cultural, and structural contexts. Researcher and subjects frame that interaction and confer meaning upon it. The viewer then is part of what is viewed rather than separate from it. What a viewer sees shapes what he or she will define, measure, and analyze. (pp. 523-524)

Charmaz (2000) contended that the grounded theory approach is sufficiently flexible and broad to include “both objectivist and constructivist visions” (p. 528). In fact, both Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Strauss and Corbin (1994) recommended adaptability and flexibility in the application of the grounded theory methodology. Accordingly, this study adopted the constructivist approach to grounded theory.

Research Questions

To document the voices of the Christian Brothers’ regarding their experiences of Catholic identity in higher education in the United States, this study examined the following research questions:

1. How do De La Salle Christian Brothers characterize Catholic identity in higher education?
2. Historically, what have been the De La Salle Christian Brothers’ personal experiences of Catholic identity in higher education?
3. Currently, what are the De La Salle Christian Brothers’ personal experiences of Catholic identity in higher education?
4. With regard to the future, how do De La Salle Christian Brothers envision Catholic identity in higher education?

Significance

This study provided research on Catholic identity from the personal voices of the sponsoring religious congregation of institutions of higher education in the United States. This grounded theory study added to the research related to the issues of Catholic higher education in the United States, specifically dealing with Catholic identity. This research may inform other religious congregations regarding Catholic identity as experienced by

members of their congregations. Researchers may replicate this study at other colleges and universities, giving voice to the sponsoring religious congregation's members regarding their experiences of Catholic identity.

In addition, an important segment of American higher education, Catholic colleges and universities, may benefit from understanding the experiences of the sponsoring religious congregation in regard to Catholic identity. Generally, many in Catholic higher education believe that their institutions are quickly becoming secularized, losing their sense of a Catholic or religious order identity (Morey & Pideritt, 2006). With decreasing vocations in religious life and, therefore, less religious present in colleges and universities, an important segment of higher education, the voices of the sponsoring religious congregation, may be lost forever.

Definition of Terms

Blog: "A popular abbreviation for weblog, it is a type of web-page that is, in the ideal, frequently updated, and which consists of dated entries arranged in reverse chronological order" (Kozinets, 2010, p. 189).

Christian Brothers: For the purpose of this study, Christian Brothers will refer to the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools (also known as Lasallian Christian Brothers, French Christian Brothers, or the De La Salle Brothers) as opposed to the Congregation of Christian Brothers.

Holy Orders: In the Catholic Church, a bishop, priest, or deacon, who has received the Sacrament of Ordination.

Lasallian: "An adjective used to describe whatever is in the Brothers' heritage or traditions as initiated by [St. John Baptist] De La Salle; more recently also used as a noun to name those who share in the mission and heritage of the Institute" (Van Grieken, 1999, p. 197).

Lay (laity): All people who are not in the clergy. Additionally, a person who is a member of a religious order who has not been ordained is considered as a member of the laity, even though they are members of a religious order (for example, the Christian Brothers).

Priest: In the Catholic Church, an ordained minister who has the authority to perform rites and administer sacraments.

Second Vatican Council: Also known as Vatican II, the 21st Ecumenical Council of the Catholic Church addressed relations between the Roman Catholic Church and the modern world. It opened under Pope John XXIII on October 11, 1962 and closed under Pope Paul VI on December 8, 1965.

Vatican: The central governing body of the Catholic Church and sovereign entity recognized by international law, consisting of the Pope and the Roman Curia.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Restatement of the Problem

Catholic identity is considered to be the single most important issue facing Catholic higher education in the United States (Allen, 1999; Daley, 1993; Gleason, 1992; Gleason 1995; Introcaso, 1996; Janosik, 1996; Morey & Piderit, 2006; O'Brien, 1994). Many scholars have suggested that sustaining Catholic identity and preventing secularization depends upon the integration of the Catholic intellectual tradition and the tradition of the sponsoring religious congregation (Buckley, 1998; Cernaro & Morgan, 2000, 2002; Curran, 1997; Gallin, 1999, 2000, 2002; Hayes, 2000b; Heft, 2003; Hellwig, 1997b, 2000, 2002a; Hesburgh, 1994; John Paul II, 1990; Langan, 2000; O'Brien, 1994, 1997; Steinfels, 2003). Morey and Piderit (2006) went so far as to claim that the loss of nuns, brothers, and priests as a vital and visible presence on campuses may prove fatal for the institutional Catholic identity (p. 3). With an aging and diminishing population of Christian Brothers present in the colleges and universities that they sponsor, the rich diversity of the experiences of the Christian Brothers regarding Catholic identity were those voices that this research intended to capture.

Overview

The researcher will first provide an overview of the history of American Catholic higher education and an exploration of Catholic identity. Then, the topics of Catholic identity and Catholic Church documents are reviewed. The third section explores the role of the sponsoring religious congregation in preserving Catholic identity in higher education.

Research on Catholic Identity

Catholic identity is one of the most critical and frequently explored issues in American Catholic higher education (Curran, 1997; Gallin, 1992, 1999, 2000; Gleason, 1995; Heft, 2003; Hellwig, 1997, 2000, 2002a, 2002b; O'Brien, 1994; Stenfels, 2003). Between 1965 and 1995, there were at least 255 doctoral dissertations related to Catholic identity in Catholic colleges and universities (Janosik, 1996). Over the past 20 years, approximately half of the articles in *Current Issues in Catholic Higher Education*, the journal of the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities, considered some aspect of Catholic identity. Since 1990, the Lily Endowment and other foundations have allocated more than 15 million dollars to colleges and universities investigating church-related identity and how to maintain it (Gallin, 2002; Mahoney, Schmalzbauer, & Youniss, 2000).

The volume of writings on Catholic identity makes it impossible to review all the literature. Therefore, the review of articles on Catholic identity concentrates on publications since 1990, the year that Pope John Paul II delivered the Apostolic Constitution *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, the document defining Catholic identity in higher education.

Catholic Identity and Higher Education in the United States

Historical Context of Catholic Higher Education in the United States

In order to understand Catholic higher education in the United States, an historical context of Roman Catholics in the United States is necessary (Greeley, 1967; O'Brien, 1994). Roman Catholicism was illegal in most of the American colonies, and the relatively small Catholic population experienced both prejudice and persecution (Ellis,

1955; Power, 1958). Considered outsiders by the dominant Protestant population, Catholics lived and socialized together (Mahoney, 2003; Schier & Russett, 2002). To safeguard the faith and develop and preserve a Catholic sub-culture, Catholic elementary schools and eventually Catholic high schools were established (Power, 1958). In 1884, American Catholic bishops mandated the establishment of an elementary school in every Catholic parish and instructed Catholic parents to send their children to these schools (Heft, 2003). Although not part of the diocesan system of Catholic education, Catholic colleges aimed to support the growing Catholic immigrant population and to protect the faith of Catholic young men and eventually young women (Curran, 1997; Fogarty, et.al., 1996; Gleason, 1995; O'Brien, 1994; Power, 1958; Stenfels, 2003). The Catholic Church set unambiguous boundaries; Catholic education offered a cohesive vision of life and protected Catholics from the modern world (O'Brien, 1994).

The distinctiveness of the Catholic college, that is its difference from other American colleges, contributed to the preservation of the Catholic sub-culture (Gallin, 2000; Gleason, 1995). Unlike other American colleges that followed the English model separating secondary and collegiate work, Catholic colleges adhered to the French and German models that combined secondary and college (Power, 1958). This model incorporated a modified version of the Jesuit *Ratio Studiorum* (plan of studies) developed in 1599, with a structured and coherent curriculum emphasizing Latin and Greek classics, rhetoric and grammar, mathematics, natural science, literature, modern languages, English, history, geography, and philosophy (Gleason, 1995; Power, 1958). Considered a reflection of societal chaos and materialistic commercialism (Gleason,

1967), the elective system had no place in Catholic colleges for more than 100 years (Power, 1958; Rudolph, 1968).

For the first century, Catholic colleges also rejected the need for research, believing it was more appropriate to pass on an accepted tradition rather than to engage in the creation of new knowledge (Fogarty et al., 1996; Heft, 2003). However, in the last decades of the 19th century, it became apparent that Catholic colleges needed to examine emerging ideas in science, philosophy, and biblical studies in light of their own faith tradition (Gleason, 1995). After extended debate, the Catholic University of America was founded in 1889. The Catholic University struggled to establish itself as a scholarly forum integrating faith and the intellectual and cultural dimensions of the world. However, politics, divergent ideologies, and competition for students created problems for the new institution (Gleason, 1995).

Debates surrounding the university were eclipsed by controversies related to Americanism and Modernism. Gleason (1995) analyzed the meaning and impact of both “isms.” Expressed simply, Americanism suggested that the Catholic Church should accept the best of modern thinking, integrate it with traditional belief, and use the newly constructed belief system for the Church’s evangelizing mission. Modernism attempted to examine philosophy, theology, and biblical exegesis in light of modern thought and research. In 1899, Pope Leo XIII condemned Americanism, and in 1907 Pope Pius X condemned modernism. These papal announcements also silenced faculty members who attempted to integrate modern thought with traditional Catholic Church teaching (Gleason, 1995). Such actions eventually led scholars to question whether it was possible to be both Catholic and committed to “dogmatic authoritarianism” and a university

committed to “intellectual freedom and methodological skepticism” (O’Brien, 2002, p. 1).

In addition to internal ideological struggles connected with The Catholic University of America and Americanism and Modernism, Catholic colleges also struggled with external challenges to the quality of their academic offerings (Gleason, 1995; Mahoney, 2003). In 1892, Harvard refused to admit Boston College students without examinations to its law school. In 1913, the North Central Association listed Notre Dame as the only Catholic accredited institution, and the American Medical Association accorded a satisfactory ranking only to St. Louis Medical School. Such challenges led Catholic colleges to concentrate on curricular revision and issues of standardization and accreditation (Gleason, 1995; Mahoney, 2003; Power, 1958). Much later, Burtchaell (1998) identified the increasing focus on academic excellence, disciplinary specialization, and accreditation as factors in the secularization of church-related colleges.

During the first 160 years of Catholic higher education in the United States, even as Catholic colleges and universities addressed challenges to their academic quality, there was no doubt about the Catholic identity of the Catholic college (Gleason, 1995; O’Brien, 1994). The philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas, also designated as Scholasticism, Neoscholasticism, and Thomism (Gleason, 1995), was the basis for Catholic intellectual formation and the principle for the integration of the Catholic intellectual tradition into the Catholic college undergraduate curriculum (Gleason, 1995, 1997; Mahoney, 2003; Marsden, 1994; Wister, 1990). In 1879, in the encyclical *Aeterni Patris*, Pope Leo XIII established the writings of Thomas Aquinas as primary in seminaries and Catholic

colleges and universities. The 1917 Code of Canon Law of the Roman Catholic Church confirmed Thomas Aquinas as the pre-eminent voice for the Catholic tradition. By 1927, speakers at the college division of the National Catholic Educational Association had endorsed the philosophy of Aquinas as the rational grounding for the Catholic faith and life (Gleason, 1995).

During this time in the early 20th Century, religious formation consisted of catechetical instruction, required participation in prayer and liturgical experiences, and pastoral support services (Gallin, 2000; Gleason, 1995; O'Brien, 1994; Power, 1958). The study of theology as an academic discipline was reserved for seminaries. The Catholic Action movement provided the model through which students in Catholic colleges engaged the Catholic faith with contemporary social, economic, and cultural issues (Carey, 1999; Gleason, 1995, 1997; Mahoney, 2003). For many Catholics, the presence of religious and priests on the campus also ensured the Catholic identity (Heft, 2003; Hellwig, 2000b). Because the externals of Catholic life, worship, and observance were highly visible on Catholic college campuses, Catholic identity was not questioned (Curran, 1997; Gallin, 2000; Gleason, 1995; Hellwig, 2002b; O'Brien, 1994; O'Meara, 1994).

Catholic Identity Contested

The portrait that most authors painted of Catholic higher education prior to World War II revealed little cause for concern about the Catholic character of the institutions. However, after 1949, questions of the institution's Catholic character began to emerge (Hellwig, 2002b). Some of the questions stemmed from within the Catholic Church and others were connected with changes in the status of Catholics within American society.

The “near mania for excellence” that emulated standards set by secular universities caused some institutions to lose their Catholic character (Gleason, 1995, p. 295). Still other concerns emerged from changes in society and culture in the years following World War II. Many associated the dilemma about Catholic identity with the changes that swept through the Church in the wake of the Second Vatican Council.

The Roman Catholic Church Definition of a Catholic University

Several authors (Gallin, 2000; Gleason, 1995; Hellwig, 2002b; O’Brien, 1994) described a concern about Catholic identity stemming from the official Vatican understanding of Catholic higher education in the middle of the 20th Century. In 1949, the International Federation of Catholic Universities (IFCU) was created to promote collaboration with the Vatican, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the International Association of Universities. The IFCU gave Catholic universities a voice in international affairs. The statutes of the IFCU defined the Catholic university as an institution erected or governed by the Roman Catholic Church, that is, the Vatican. Within the American Catholic higher education system, only The Catholic University of America met this description. In contrast to the Vatican definition, the American experience of Catholic higher education embraced the concept of institutional autonomy ensuring the institution freedom from outside control, including control by ecclesiastical leaders, in such matters as hiring, policy formation, and curriculum development (Gleason, 1995). To respect the reality of American Catholic colleges and universities, the IFCU revised its statutes and membership requirements in 1963 to include colleges and universities not erected by the Vatican.

However, the original definition remained a source of difficulty between the IFCU and the Vatican.

The Status of American Catholics

The historical situation of American Catholics also impacted Catholic identity. By the end of World War II, American Catholics were no longer struggling immigrants on the fringes of American society (Gleason, 1967). O'Brien (1994) described the decline of the American Catholic subculture: The Catholic blue collar, low income immigrants of the 1930s were replaced in the years following World War II by economically secure professionals. The advancement and acculturation of American Catholics were reflected in the growth of American Catholic colleges (Fogarty et al., 1996; Greeley, 1967). Between 1940 and 1960, U.S. Catholic colleges and universities increased from 193 to 231, the number of faculty members grew from 13,142 to 24,255, and, enrollments surged from 162,000 to more than 426,000 (Gleason, 1995). Increasingly, lay women and men educated in secular universities joined the faculties of Catholic colleges (Carey, 1997, 1999; Curran, 1997; Greeley, 1967). As Catholics entered mainstream American society and culture, Catholic colleges and universities no longer needed to serve as a protective counter-culture (Curran, 1997; Gallin, 2000; Gleason, 1995; O'Brien, 1994).

The Quest for Academic Excellence

Between 1940 and 1960, a time of growth in college enrollments and the increased desire for higher education among an upwardly mobile Catholic population, historian John Tracy Ellis (1955) criticized American Catholic colleges and universities for failing to contribute to American intellectual life (Shelley, 1995). Ellis (1955)

contended that Catholic colleges and universities stressed moral development but failed to cultivate intellectual excellence. Although this was not the first criticism of the intellectual vitality of American Catholic higher education, Ellis's indictment provoked unprecedented efforts to raise academic standards (Fogarty et al., 1996; Gallin, 2000; Gleason, 1995; O'Brien, 1994; Rehner, 1989; Shelley, 1995). Catholic colleges and universities joined other American institutions of higher education in a renewed quest for excellence precipitated by scientific exploration, the National Defense Education Act, and the Rockefeller Fund report, *The Pursuit of Excellence* (O'Brien, 1994). However, the focus on academic excellence ignored one of Ellis's main points: Catholic educators had neglected to develop and share the distinctive Catholic intellectual heritage (Gallin, 2000; Gleason, 1995; O'Brien, 1994). In the pursuit of excellence according to the standards of secular American universities, Catholic institutions may have "shut out, at least temporarily, some of the wisdom resident in their own rich tradition" (Gallin, 2000, p. 110).

Upheaval Within American Society

The decade of the 1960s was an era of questioning and challenge that impacted individuals, society, and institutions. The list of issues and causes was endless, such as civil rights, the Vietnam War, women's rights, and the rights of students. Underlying the issues were fundamental questions about human, political, and academic freedoms (O'Brien, 1994). The Catholic campus was not immune to the resulting upheaval on college campuses across the nation (Curran, 1997; Gallin, 2000; Gleason, 1995; O'Brien, 1994). In addition to the problems faced by society in general, the Catholic college faced a unique set of challenges: the implications of the Second Vatican Council; the decline in

the religious presence within faculties, administrations, and boards of colleges and universities; and the challenges to academic freedom.

Second Vatican Council

The Second Vatican Council (October 1962 to December 1965) was a noteworthy event in the relationship of the Catholic Church and Catholic higher education, specifically the Council's deliberations and decrees related to religious freedom, the role of the laity, and ecumenism (Gallin, 2000). The Council decentered the Church, proclaiming that the Church's life was meant to be within, and not apart from, the life of the entire human family (Mahoney, 2003; O'Brien, 1994). Such an understanding of church and what it meant to be Catholic replaced the vision of a Catholic counter-culture with the vision of a Catholic community within and in dialogue with all cultures.

Gaudium et Spes or *The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* (Paul VI, 1965) became the "magna carta" for Catholic higher education, encouraging a study of human sciences, inter-religious dialogue, service to society, and respect for all cultures (O'Brien, 1994, p. 49). The relationship between the Church and Catholic colleges and universities shifted from a juridical context to a collegial community characterized by trust, mutual exchange, and genuine dialogue (Gannon, 1987). In response to the Council's affirmation of ecumenism and inter-religious dialogue, Catholic colleges diversified their curricular offerings and recruited faculty members with other-than Catholic viewpoints (Carey, 1999; Gallin, 2000; O'Brien, 1994; Steinfels, 2003). Gallin (2000) observed that ecumenical outreach "added to the richness of faculty competencies and insights, but it also diminished the number of now-tenured faculty with a deep commitment to the Catholic faith at the root of the tradition of the institution" (p. 183).

Decline in Presence of Clergy and Religious

In the wake of the Second Vatican Council, religious congregations experienced a decline in their membership. Many of those who remained questioned the purpose of institutional ministries and opted for more direct forms of service, choosing involvement in works related to civil rights, peace, and poverty (Hellwig, 2000a). The movement away from service in Catholic colleges and universities by many priests and religious affected morale within the institutions and increased confusion about identity and purpose (Heft, 2003). The decreasing presence of religious in Catholic colleges and universities also contributed to ambiguity because the canonical status of Catholic institutions flowed through their connection with religious congregations (Gallin, 2000). The departure of priests and religious from college campuses created an imbalance that impacted Catholic identity. Holtschneider and Morey (2000) observed that in the late 1960s and 1970s, “with a core group of congregation members highly visible and involved in campus life,” other faculty members of other denominations were hired to bring “diverse intellectual and faith perspectives” (p. 35). Faculty hired primarily for their diverse intellectual and faith perspectives were not likely to be prepared to sustain and develop the Catholic and congregational cultures and identity (Holtschneider & Morey, 2000).

Laicization of Boards

During the early 1970s, a number of factors converged and resulted in the formation of lay boards of trustees in most Catholic colleges and universities (Gallin, 1999, 2000; Gleason, 1995; O’Brien, 1994). From a theological point of view, the Second Vatican Council’s promotion of the role of the laity encouraged many religious

congregations to share the governance and administration of their institutions. At the same time, the decreasing number of priests and religious made a change in governance a practical necessity. Furthermore, as federal aid became available to institutions that were not pervasively sectarian, colleges recognized the need to ensure that there was neither the reality nor a perception of inappropriate control by the Church or by religious congregations. The governance change created a new partnership between lay and priests and religious, with religious sponsors remaining as significant participants in administration and policy formation (Gallin, 1992, 2000; Gleason, 1995). While some authors equated the transition to lay boards with secularization, most suggested that the move to lay governance encouraged Catholic colleges and universities to become more intentional about an identity and purpose that many had taken for granted (Curran, 1997; Hellwig, 2000c).

Catholic Identity and the Catholic Church

Land O'Lakes

Beginning in 1967, the Roman Catholic Church produced a number of documents related to the identity and purpose of Catholic higher education (Gallin, 1992, 2000; Gleason, 1995; O'Brien, 1994; Steinfels, 1995, 2003). According to Gallin (1992), the documents attempted to respond to two questions: "What does it mean to be a university or college, and what does it mean for that institution to be Catholic?" (p. 1). From 1967 to 1972, the International Federation of Catholic Universities (IFCU) held a series of meetings in Colombia, Manila, Paris, and Land O'Lakes, Wisconsin, to prepare for the development of a statement on the nature of the Catholic university. The meetings

culminated in the publication, *The Catholic University in the Modern World* (National Catholic Education Association, 1973).

The most important of these meetings for American Catholic universities was the Land O'Lakes, Wisconsin, gathering in 1967 (Steinfels, 1995, 2003). Gleason (1995) described the Land O'Lakes statement as a "symbolic manifesto" which marked a new era in Catholic higher education (p. 317). The Land O'Lakes document proclaimed the American Catholic college and university's identity as an academic and scholarly institution committed to the pursuit of truth. The Land O'Lakes document introduced two concepts that became foundational for all future conversations about the nature of Catholic higher education: academic freedom and institutional autonomy (Gallin, 1992).

In addition to the Land O'Lakes document, Gallin (1992) described the content and impact of several documents related to Catholic higher education. In 1976, the College and University Department of the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA) issued a position paper concerning relations between American Catholic colleges and universities and the Church. The position paper enumerated several dimensions of Catholic identity, including service to the Church and society, strong theological studies programs, leadership in ecumenical efforts, effective pastoral ministry on campus, provision for theological and ethical reflection on secular disciplines, vibrant liturgical life, and establishment of forums for dialogue with the Church. Pope John Paul II also issued various statements and personally addressed the presidents of Catholic colleges and universities in 1979. At this address, John Paul II stated,

Every university or college is qualified by a specified mode of being. Yours is the qualification of being Catholic, of affirming God, his revelation and the Catholic Church as the guardian and interpreter of that revelation. The term Catholic will

never be a mere label either added or dropped according to the pressures of varying factors. (p. 919)

In 1980, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops issued a statement attesting to the important contributions of Catholic higher education. The bishops' opening sentences were:

As we enter the twentieth decade of Catholic higher education in the United States, we wish to express in a formal fashion our profound gratitude and esteem for those in this ministry. They serve the entire American people in every field of learning. They also serve the Church in three indispensable ways. Catholic colleges and universities strive to bring faith and reason into an intellectually disciplined and constructive encounter. In addition, they are called to be communities of faith and worship.... Finally, our schools are serving increasingly the educational needs of adults as they seek to advance their learning at various stages of their lives. (p. 1)

While each of these documents had a specific focus, several common elements were evident: the role of the university in facilitating an encounter between faith and reason; the importance of providing students with a foundation in their Catholic theological heritage; the encouragement of teaching and research that would support human development and address issues related to peace and justice; and, a desire to maintain a healthy balance between the academy and the Catholic Church, free from inappropriate restraint and control.

Ex Corde Ecclesiae

Of all the documents issued, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, the pontifical document on Catholic higher education, received the most attention in the literature. In *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, Pope John Paul II (1990) articulated the basic feature of a Catholic institution of higher education: Christian inspiration, reflection upon human knowledge in light of the Catholic faith, fidelity to the Christian message as expressed through the Church, and, institutional commitment to all people. The Catholic university, according to John Paul

II, “must be both a community of scholars representing various branches of human knowledge, and an academic institution in which Catholicism is vitally present and operative” (§ 14). In addition to the general features of a Catholic institution, John Paul II described in concrete terms the responsibilities of the faculty. The Pope highlighted the need for a “fruitful dialogue between the Gospel and culture” in both faculty research and teaching (§ 43).

Gallin (1992) traced the development of *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, beginning in 1980 when the Congregation for Catholic Education initiated a worldwide consultative process of reflection and discussion on the nature of a Catholic university. After several drafts were circulated for comment, the official document was published in 1990. Finally accepted by American bishops in 1999, *Ex Corde* continues to be the subject of much debate. Several scholars (Buckley, 1998; Hellwig, 1997, 2000, 2004; Hesburg, 1994; Langan, 1993, 2001) have written and edited extensive explications and critiques of *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, expanding upon, clarifying, and challenging John Paul II’s vision for a Catholic university.

In 2000, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops published *The Application of Ex Corde Ecclesiae for the United States*. This document affirmed the institutional autonomy and academic freedom essential for an educational institution. In addition, the document identified particular norms to enable Catholic colleges and universities to remain faithful to their Catholic identity. The norms included guidance on incorporating into institutional documents, statements about Catholic identity and ensuring that Catholic principles appropriately influence the teaching of theology, morality, and ethics. The guidelines also recommended that Catholic teaching be integrated, when appropriate,

in other academic disciplines. The document specified that institutions should provide pastoral ministry programs and worship opportunities in the Catholic tradition. In addition, the norms stated the importance of hiring practices with attention to Catholic identity. The document also recommended that the president of the institution should be a Catholic and that efforts should be made to attract a majority of qualified Catholic trustees and faculty members. Finally, the norms recommended collaboration between Catholic institutions and the Church and stated that Catholics who teach theology should seek a mandatum from the local Bishop acknowledging their commitment to teach authentic Catholic doctrine.

Pope Benedict XVI and Catholic Identity

In his April 17, 2008, address to Catholic educators at the various levels of their respective institutions in the United States, Pope Benedict XVI commented on his interpretation of the role that Catholic identity should play in Catholic education.

A university or school's Catholic identity is not simply a question of the number of Catholic students. It is a question of conviction – do we really believe that only in the mystery of the Word made flesh does the mystery of man truly become clear (cf. *Gaudium et Spes*, 22)? Are we ready to commit our entire self-intellect and will, mind and heart – to God? Do we accept the truth Christ reveals? Is the faith tangible in our universities and schools? Is it given fervent expression liturgically, sacramentally, through prayer, acts of charity, a concern for justice and respect for God's creation? Only in this way do we really bear witness to the meaning of who we are and what we uphold. (p. 742)

Pope Benedict continued:

Clearly, then, Catholic identity is not dependent upon statistics. Neither can it be equated simply with orthodoxy of course content. It demands and inspires much more: namely that each and every aspect of your learning communities reverberates within the ecclesial life of faith. Only in faith can truth become incarnate and reason truly human, capable of directing the will along the path of freedom (cf. *Spe Salvi*, 23). In this way our institutions make a vital contribution to the mission of the church and truly serve society. They become places in which

God's active presence in human affairs is recognized and in which every young person discovers the joy of entering into Christ's "being for others." (p. 743)

Pope Benedict's remarks to Catholic educators were intended to motivate them to rededicate themselves and their institutions to the promotion of Catholic identity in all aspects of the lives of their institutions. Nevertheless, he did not give specific or concrete steps for Catholic educators to undertake to promote Catholic identity in higher education. It is apparent that Pope Benedict, himself, a former university professor, remained very concerned that Catholic identity should pervade all aspects of the life of a university that promotes itself as a Catholic university.

Congregation for Catholic Education

As Secretary for the Congregation for Catholic Education, Archbishop Michael Miller was very concerned with helping Catholic universities to better understand what their Catholic identity entailed. In 2005, Archbishop Miller expressed the Congregation's concern that all Catholic universities should preserve and foster their Catholic identity, which he indicated could present the greatest challenge that these institutions might embrace. Archbishop Miller stated,

To date the Holy See's primary concern at every level is encouraging the fostering and, if necessary, the reclaiming of the Catholic identity of institutions of higher learning. It does this . . . by insisting first on the university's institutional commitment to the church and second on its fidelity to the Catholic faith in all its activities. (p. 453)

Archbishop Miller (2005) suggested that the measure of an institution's Catholic identity be judged by the integrity of its Gospel witness to the Church and the world. If this is so, then it could mean that where secularization in a university proves to be irrevocably entrenched it might be a matter of truthfulness and justice for such an institution to no longer be considered officially Catholic. He stated, "Some

commentators would conclude from this that if a nominally Catholic university is no longer motivated by a strong sense of its institutional Catholic identity, it is better to let it go, to end its claim of being Catholic” (p. 454).

Rather than focus the issue of Catholic identity on the minimum standards that a university must attain to be considered Catholic, what Archbishop Miller (2005) referred to as "sterile arguments over how 'Catholic-lite' a university can be and still be Catholic” (p. 454), he characterized the issue with a different emphasis: "How does a Catholic university honestly and effectively provide a Christian presence in the world of higher education? The burden of proof now falls on the university itself” (p. 455). This question requires a university that wishes to continue to retain its identity as a Catholic university to plan for the future with its Catholicity in mind. Archbishop Miller cautioned that the answer to this question cannot be simply to preserve the status quo,

...instead it involves positive institutional changes which will result in clear witness where this has not been the case in teaching and scholarship to Catholicism's rich intellectual, artistic, moral, literary, historical, spiritual, socio-political and even scientific traditions. (p. 455)

Thus, one way in which a Catholic college or university demonstrates its Catholic identity is through its relationship with the Church and its incorporation of Church teachings into its curriculum. An institution that claims to be Catholic, but picks and chooses its own ways of demonstrating its Catholicity rather than looking to the Church for guidance, is more akin to what Archbishop Miller (2005) refers to as a “Catholic-lite” college or university rather than a Catholic college or university that truly embraces its Catholic identity.

Research Studies on Catholic Identity in Higher Education

A result of the concern and speculation on the causes of a perceived loss of Catholic identity among American Catholic colleges and universities has been an increase in reflection and research focused on the concept of Catholic identity and the means by which the Catholic identity of American Catholic higher education is nurtured and enhanced (Dwyer & Zech, 1996; Galvin, 1971; Houston, 1995; Introcaso, 1996; Janosik, 1996; Lucey, 1978; Mahoney, 1973).

As the studies cited in chronological order in this section of the literature review indicate, the issue of Catholic identity has been a research topic for more than 30 years. However, while a number of variables have been identified with the issue of Catholic identity, the experiences of Catholic identity from members of sponsoring religious communities has not yet been examined. Nonetheless, previous research on the issue of Catholic identity and American Catholic colleges and universities provides a relevant consideration for this study.

Ford and Roy (1968), in their study on American Catholic higher education, found that unique organizational and governance structures, as well as distinct institutional operating philosophies, impacted by what they considered to be independent direction from the founding religious orders of American Catholic colleges and universities, resulted in autonomy, lack of coordination, and diverse philosophical differences among the leadership of American Catholic higher education. They concluded that these results had much the same effect on American Catholic higher education as denominational differences had earlier impacted Protestant institutions of higher education.

Maloney (1973) studied the religious orientation of Catholic colleges and universities in the state of New York between 1967 and 1972. The results of Maloney's study indicated that a pattern had emerged among the 25 institutions that were part of his study. He found that at each institution the governance structure had changed by allowing Catholic and non-Catholic laity to serve as members on its board of trustees. As a result, there was a weakening of control by the sponsoring religious order. Maloney also found that an increased presence of laypersons, both Catholic and non-Catholic, as faculty members and administrators also contributed to weakening the control previously exercised by the founding religious order. Due to a decline in the number of priests, brothers, and sisters at the 25 Catholic colleges and universities studied, laypersons, both Catholic and non-Catholic, had become increasingly influential at these institutions.

A number of other important changes, particularly in the areas of academic affairs and student life, were discovered in Maloney's (1973) study. Among these discoveries were: 1) non-Catholic student enrollment had increased by 11% between 1967 and 1972, 2) curriculum revisions had reduced the number of courses required in theology and philosophy, 3) most schools had become coeducational institutions, 4) student life had become more relaxed and less closely monitored, and 5) interest in extra-curricular religious activities had significantly decreased.

Maloney (1973) also discovered another significant change that impacted Catholic higher education, as well as all church-related colleges and universities in the State of New York. This significant change was the decision to provide private colleges and universities in the state, which could demonstrate their non-sectarian character, access to state aid. Bundy Aid, as it was called, was named after McGeorge Bundy, who,

in 1967, headed the Select Committee on the Future of Private and Independent Higher Education in New York State. The committee had been developed to advise the governor on how the State could best help preserve the strength and vitality of private church-related and non-church-related colleges and universities, while simultaneously adhering to the constitutional requirement of separation of church and state.

Maloney (1973) reported that, while access to the state aid was a blessing for private and independent higher education in the State of New York, accepting the aid was the first step down the slippery slope of secularization for many church-related institutions of higher education in the state that suddenly had to down-play their distinctive denominational religious character to be eligible to receive money. As a result, church-related colleges and universities in New York were forced to become less denominational and more ecumenical, with an emphasis placed on values rather than on their respective distinctive denominational religious character and doctrine.

Maloney (1973) concluded that the Catholic colleges and universities studied had become increasingly secular or pluralistic in nature, and as result, their Catholic identity had become weakened. He further concluded that, if these issues were not readily addressed, the distinctive Catholic character of American Catholic higher education would be difficult to maintain and could eventually disappear.

A relevant study to the research being conducted in the present study was a case study by Lucey (1978). He used a qualitative approach to analyze how Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, maintained its Catholicity in an increasingly pluralistic environment. Through the use of interviews, participant observation, and university documents, Lucey analyzed policies and procedures related to faculty

recruitment and selection, as well as promotion, tenure, and other faculty reward initiatives.

Lucey (1978) concluded from his case study that the Catholic identity and nature of Marquette University was seriously endangered by the internal dynamics of the institution, particularly a growing pluralism within the university arising from the process of recruiting and hiring faculty. Lucey further concluded that if new faculty members were not better oriented to the Catholic nature of the institution, and more supportive of Marquette as a distinctively Catholic university, Marquette's Catholic identity was in serious jeopardy.

Lucey (1978) operated from the premise that an institution's Catholic identity derived its meaning from the shared beliefs and values of its community of scholars. He found that as the percentage of Roman Catholics on Marquette's faculty declined, the pluralism of the institution increased and the shared vision and values of the academic community became increasingly diverse and, thus, posed a grave threat to Marquette's distinctively Catholic character. As a result of the study, Lucey commented on the challenge that faced American Catholic higher education during the remaining years of the twentieth century, and stated, "The maintenance of the distinctiveness of the Catholic university through the effective exercise of freedom is the challenge of the closing decades of the 20th century for American, Catholic higher education" (p. 271).

Preville (1985) took a different approach in his research study related to the Catholic identity issue among American Catholic higher education. Using historical analysis to study Fairfield University in Connecticut, Preville found several key variables that defined change and continuity in the "emergence of a modern Catholic university"

(p. 12). Among these variables were the movement toward shared governance and administration, the expansion of academic programs, and increased student diversity. Preville's study reinforced previously expressed concerns that the issues of change in institutional governance, the expansion of academic programs, and the increasing numbers of non-Catholic students enrolled in Catholic colleges and universities contributed to their increased secularization.

Using an ethnographic case study methodology, Salvaterra (1990) examined two Catholic colleges and their adaption to change, both within the Roman Catholic Church and society, in general, during the previous 25 years. Through her research, Salvaterra found that the faculty and trustees perceived one institution as ecumenical, liberal, and humanistic in nature. Meanwhile, the other institution remained a small liberal arts institution throughout its history, and had a clear understanding of its Catholic character and relationship to its founding religious order. Salvaterra described the first institution as having a "weak culture" (p. 164), while the latter institution had a strong culture with a unified perception of its Catholic character.

As a result of her study, Salvaterra (1990) recommended the consideration of Catholicism as a culture, rather than a creed, thus providing opportunities for trustees and administrators, whether lay or religious, to develop creative ways to maintain and express an institution's Catholic character. Salvaterra, recognizing that lay men and women, particularly board of trustees members, presidents, and deans would increasingly be replacing religious personnel as guardians of an institution's religious heritage, commented, "Presidents and deans must have a clear understanding of the organizational culture and the philosophy of the college and hire those faculty who can work

comfortably, regardless of their personal differences, within the organization's culture"

(pp. 208-209). Salvaterra went on to comment,

If colleges founded by religious orders are to remain true to their religious heritage at a time when religious personnel are dwindling and more and more lay people are employed in all aspects of the college, then sponsoring religious communities must make clear their role in sustaining the Catholic character of the institution. (p. 209)

Salvaterra (1990) believed that sponsoring religious orders should articulate to an institution's board of trustees three ways in which the board could maintain the Catholic character of the institution originally espoused by the sponsoring religious order: 1) make clearly evident the values and charism of the sponsoring order; 2) effectively convey the philosophy and mission of the sponsoring religious order; and, 3) publicly share information on the institution's mission, and identify itself publicly with the sponsoring order and its mission.

The importance of presidential influence in articulating and maintaining a strong distinctive Catholic identity for American Catholic colleges and universities was further reinforced by a study conducted by Nicholson (1991). Nicholson conducted a qualitative study of the faculty at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts. Nicholson asked faculty how they perceived the meaning and conduct of their work within the special context of Holy Cross, and whether they shared the values and beliefs associated with Holy Cross. Nicholson concluded that the beliefs of Holy Cross's largely pluralistic faculty in regard to the principles of collegiality and governance competed with the spiritual beliefs and hierarchical structures of the college. The increasing importance that faculty places on the academic values that emphasized teaching,

research, and public service were sometimes in direct competition with the authoritarian, communal, and familial dimensions of Holy Cross College's history.

Murphy (1991) studied the visions and values of five Catholic colleges and universities and found that Catholic ideology, particularly as expressed within the tradition of the sponsoring religious order and through the leadership of the institution (that is, the president), significantly influenced the perceptions and attitudes of the graduates of the institutions with respect to the Catholicity of their respective alma mater. Both Nicholson's (1991) and Murphy's (1991) studies reinforce Salvaterra's (1990) belief that the maintenance of an institution's Catholic character or identity rests more with the president of the institution than with any other constituency of the institution.

Dodge (1991) used a case study methodology in her study conducted at the College of Mount Saint Vincent. She sought to identify elements that its constituents (trustees, administrators, faculty, staff, students, alumni, and parents) perceived as contributing to its Catholic identity. Using questionnaires and interviews to gather data, Dodge discovered that parents, students, and alumni of the College of Mount Saint Vincent believed that the college's Catholic identity was based, to a great extent, on the signs and symbols of Catholicism that were prevalent on campus (that is, crucifixes, religious paintings, a chapel on campus, and the presence of members of the sponsoring religious order). The presence of members of the sponsoring religious order was a particularly important factor for the college's administrators and staff. A number of activities, such as opportunities for worship and prayer and reaching out to those less fortunate, were also identified as significant contributions to the college's strong Catholic identity.

Dodge (1991) concluded that, since the presence of members of the sponsoring religious order was believed to be such an important factor in the College of Mount Saint Vincent's strong Catholic identity by three major constituents (parents, students, and alumni), the college should act quickly to insure that the absence or decrease in the numbers of religious on campus would not adversely affect the Catholic character and identity of the college. Dodge recommended that the college work with its lay administrators, faculty, and staff, both Catholic and non-Catholic, to insure that they understand and appreciate the college's Catholic heritage and tradition, and the role it plays within the current context of Catholic higher education. Dodge believed that, as the numbers of religious on campus decrease, it will become increasingly more important for the lay members of the college community, both Catholic and non-Catholic, to articulate their commitment to the values of the sponsoring religious order and the college, and to take an active role in expressing and promoting those values. Dodge's (1991) study, which concludes that increasing numbers of lay persons, both Catholic and non-Catholic, have the potential to weaken the distinctive Catholic identity of Catholic colleges and universities.

In an attempt to examine the components of Catholic identity that were most important to presidents of American Catholic colleges and universities, Janosik (1996) surveyed the presidents of every Catholic college and university in the United States, from those awarding associate degrees only to those granting doctoral degrees. His purpose was to investigate presidential priorities as they related to promoting a distinctive Catholic identity for their respective institutions.

Based on the responses of 176 presidents, Janosik (1996) found that presidents at research and graduate degree granting institutions placed much greater emphasis on excellence, quality, and academic outcome measures in terms of defining their institutional identity, thus placing more emphasis on the academic dimensions as opposed to the religious character of their respective institutions. On the other hand, presidents at baccalaureate degree granting institutions placed the institution's relationship with the Catholic Church and the founding/sponsoring religious order/community, as well as the philosophy and religion curriculum, as their highest priorities in terms of defining a distinctively Catholic identity for their respective institutions.

Those findings led Janosik (1996) to conclude that smaller baccalaureate degree granting institutions with a stronger homogeneity of purpose were much more likely to be stronger proponents for the religious character and dimension of an institution's mission as well as for the founding religious order/community. He further concluded that, in the near future, perhaps only baccalaureate degree granting institutions would be able to maintain the ability to remain distinctively Catholic by delicately balancing autonomy and loyalty to the Catholic Church, and by integrating both the religious and secular dimensions of a Catholic college or university.

In another study examining the role of Catholic college and university faculty in promoting and maintaining a distinctive Catholic identity for their respective institutions, Dwyer and Zech (1996) examined the extent to which faculty identified with their institution's Catholic mission. In their study, they surveyed 98 Catholic colleges and universities, stratified by institutional type, and analyzed the responses to assess faculty attitudes on curriculum content, hiring practices, and other dimensions of institutional

identity. Dwyer and Zech found that more than 60% of the faculty surveyed believed that the primary criteria for selecting new faculty was finding the most qualified candidate, regardless of their religious affiliation. Fewer than 50% of the faculty agreed that their respective institution articulated to both new and veteran faculty the expectation that they be sympathetic to the Catholic character and mission of their employing institution.

When compared to faculty at liberal arts and comprehensive colleges and universities, Dwyer and Zech (1996) revealed that faculty at doctoral granting institutions were less likely to agree that they attempt to make connections between their personal religious faith and their teaching and research, that they teach Catholic values across the curriculum, and that they felt connected to or concerned with the Catholic character or mission of their respective institution's Catholic mission and identity. More specifically, Dwyer and Zech discovered that faculty tended to disagree on the following issues: 1) on increasing philosophy and theology requirements, 2) that teaching values across the curriculum was important, and 3) that ongoing faculty development regarding their institution's Catholic heritage and missions was provided to both new and veteran faculty.

In a commentary on his 1996 study conducted with Dwyer, Zech (1999) concluded that the survey that they used in their study struck a nerve among the faculty responding, and comments, "While most faculty members were supportive of their institution's Catholic mission, some were indifferent or even openly hostile to the notion that the Catholic identity of their school should be important" (p. 11). Zech also stated that he and Dwyer found that non-Catholic faculty members were, in most instances, less knowledgeable and supportive of their institution's Catholic identity and mission. Zech

further stated that, although he and Dwyer found that many faculty believed that the Catholic identity and mission of their respective institution was insignificant, they also discovered that faculty believed that the presence of vowed religious (priests, brothers, and sisters) played a crucial role in inspiring positive attitudes among the campus community toward the institution's Catholic identity. Regarding this finding, Zech commented,

The example set by those faculty members who are vowed religious apparently permeates the entire faculty and sets a tone for connecting with the school's mission.... Catholic colleges and universities should make every effort to ensure that those few vowed religious who are on campus serve as prominent role models to the rest of the community, regardless of their official position (for example: faculty member, campus minister, administrator). (p. 11)

Interestingly, Zech (1999) reported that he and Dwyer discovered that special liturgies and workshops that focused on the institution's distinctive Catholic identity were effective means of conveying the message to all faculty, both Catholic and non-Catholic, that the institution's Catholic identity and mission were important.

Lastly, Zech (1999) concluded that the size and scope of the institution affected the institution's ability to promote and maintain a distinctively Catholic identity and mission. In commenting on this discovery, Zech stated, "In nearly every measure that we used, faculty members at liberal arts colleges identified most strongly with their institution's Catholic mission, followed by faculties at comprehensive universities. Those who taught at research universities felt the least connected" (p. 11). These findings support those of Janosik (1996), who also found that, as Catholic colleges and universities in the United States increase in size and scope and become doctoral or research institutions, their heightened interest in research and scholarship far

overshadowed both their interest in and their ability to maintain a strong and distinctive Catholic identity.

Quantitative research methods were utilized by Introcaso (1996) in her doctoral dissertation. According to Introcaso, the purpose of her study was

...to investigate the ways in which American Catholic colleges and universities, founded by women's religious congregations, define the nature of their Catholic identity and to examine that identity in light of the Vatican's definition of Catholic identity contained in *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*. (p. 377)

Using case study methodology, Introcaso (1996) examined five aspects of an institution's Catholic identity at five diverse Catholic colleges and universities founded by women's religious congregations. The five dimensions studied were the geospatial or physical, symbolic, behavioral, values and beliefs, and structural elements. These five elements of an institution's culture were utilized by Introcaso to develop a profile of each institution's Catholic identity.

Introcaso (1996) revealed that Catholic identity was "alive and well" (p. 362) at the five institutions in her study. Although the institutions' Catholic identities manifested themselves in various ways, and were evident in both cultural and structural dimensions, she discovered them to be most strongly embedded in the culture of each campus she studied. In asking the question, "What is the nature of Catholic identity at American Catholic colleges and universities founded by women religious?" (p. 378), she ascertained that the answer to that question was found in the campus culture of each institution; "a culture that reflects a strong commitment to the Catholic faith tradition that is lived out in the actions and interactions of [each] college community" (p. 380).

Introcaso (1996) itemized five factors that supported the strong Catholic identity at each of the five institutions she studied. First, there existed a strong relationship

between the institution and the founding religious order/community. Second, the rituals and practices of the Catholic faith were a vital part of the religious life of the campus. Third, the values and beliefs of each campus community were referred to as “gospel values” (p. 390). Fourth, the organizational structure of each institution was connected in various ways to the Catholic faith tradition. Lastly, presidential leadership was critical to the clarification and articulation of the distinctive Catholic identity of each institution.

Introcaso (1996) concluded from her study that an institution’s distinctive Catholic identity is most at risk when there is a lack of clarity within the institution regarding its Catholic identity, a weak relationship between the institution and its founding religious order/community, a distant relationship with authorities of the Catholic Church, and lastly, the institution lacks a “critical mass” of people supportive of Catholicism. Additionally, Introcaso determined that every institution met the criteria of *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, and all were strongly rooted in the structural elements considered by the Vatican to be the essential characteristics of a Catholic college or university.

Introcaso’s (1996) findings validated the variables studied by Galvin (1971), Maloney (1973), and Lucey (1978), and the timeless importance of these variables (that is, institutional relationship with the founding order, the prevalence of Catholic rituals and practices on campus, the presence of a “critical mass” of Catholics on campus, the role of presidential leadership as it relates to clarifying and articulating the distinctive Catholic identity of an institution) in manifesting a strong and distinctive Catholic identity. Introcaso’s findings also confirmed the qualitative findings of Preville (1985), Salvaterra (1990), Dodge (1991), Murphy (1991), and Nicholson (1991) that the strength of the relationship with the institution’s founding religious order/community, the

presence of priests, brothers, and sisters on campus, the importance of a “critical mass” of Catholics on campus, the prevalence of Catholic practices and rituals on campus, and the vital role of the institution’s president in promoting and articulating their respective institution’s distinctively Catholic character and mission all contribute to a Catholic college or university maintaining a strong and distinctive Catholic identity.

Provost (2000) argued that Catholic identity is composed of both persons and procedures. Catholic persons are those who have been baptized and "are joined fully to the Catholic Church by bonds of profession of faith, sacraments, and discipline" (pp. 22-23). All members of the Christian faithful are eligible to participate in the mission and identity of a Catholic university. Nevertheless, Provost argued that for a university to be Catholic, a critical mass of people in full communion with the Church is required. He wrote, "Provided the critical mass is active, committed, and effective, participation by others (Christians not in full communion and other persons) can enrich the genuine universal (and in that sense 'catholic') character of the institution" (p. 23).

Provost (2000) also argued that a university should promote its Catholic identity by furthering the Church's teachings on social ethics and protecting the dignity of the human person: “For an institution of higher education to be Catholic implies a fundamental respect for the dignity of each person (students and faculty, staff and administration), and promoting a deep respect for human dignity among its graduates (p. 23). Provost saw the university's protection of the dignity of the human person as "a benchmark that can be used to evaluate whether the institution shows the effects of being Catholic" (p. 23).

Provost (2000) also commented on the importance of a university's curriculum in promoting its Catholic identity. He stated,

This [Catholic identity] is not limited to the importance of courses in philosophy and theology, or the provision for courses of ethical reflection in every field. It is also expressed in the fields an institution chooses to emphasize, the kinds of research it promoted, and the funding it provides for specialized academic efforts even in an interdisciplinary fashion. If there is no difference between the curriculum of any other school and a Catholic institution, where is the Catholic identity? Both the procedures for developing curriculum and the criteria applied to making these decisions are important opportunities for the Catholic identity to express itself. (p. 25)

Lastly, Provost (2000) submitted that promoting Catholic identity comes from a balance of influences arising from within the university itself, as described above, but also includes external influences, such as boards of trustees, the Church's hierarchy, and canonical norms to regulate their operation.

Role of the Sponsoring Religious Congregation

Congregations of women and men religious have played a major role in Catholic higher education since the Jesuits founded Georgetown, the first American Catholic college, in 1789 (Power, 1958). However, with the exception of the Jesuits, the stories of sponsoring religious congregations and the institutions they founded have been largely ignored (Mahoney, 2003; Schier & Russett, 2002; White, 2004). Gallin (1999) noted that the connection with the sponsoring religious congregation was one of the factors that differentiated Catholic institutions from other church-related colleges and universities. Unlike Protestant institutions, which had a direct relationship with the parent church, most Catholic institutions were considered Catholic because they were apostolic works of religious congregations that had canonical status (Gallin, 1999). These Catholic institutions reflected the distinctive heritage of their sponsoring religious congregations

(Benne, 2001; Burrows, 1999; Gallin, 1999, 2000; Hughes & Adrian, 1997; Introcaso, 1996; Landy, 2000, 2001; Morey, 1995; Murphy, 1991; Salvaterra, 1991; Schier & Russett, 2002). Catholic colleges and universities have benefited from the post-Vatican II effort of religious congregations to renew themselves in the spirit of their founders (Cushing, 2001; Introcaso, 1996). Many congregations established national organizations to develop a shared vision for their institutions in light of contemporary concerns (White, 2004). According to Morey (1995), both congregational leaders and college presidents reported that “the legacy of the founding congregation is a vital component” of the college’s identity (p. 260). In fact, college presidents felt that the legacy of the sponsoring congregations helped Catholic and non-Catholic members of the college community find common ground (Morey, 1995). At the same time, congregational leaders have affirmed that colleges have assisted religious congregations to extend the charisms of their founders (Morey, 2002). Indeed, Heft (2003) and Knoerle and Schier (2002) claimed that, as their memberships declined, some congregations may ensure the perpetuation of their legacies through their sponsored colleges and universities.

A number of studies have focused on the unique charism of the sponsoring congregation as a vital component of the institution’s identity. Women scholars who met regularly to support one another in their research, writing, and navigation of the tenure system, evolved into a reflection group on the mission of the Marianist college in which they served (Seery, et.al., 2002). A study of how Benedictine values have been implemented over the 40-year history of one university led to the conclusion that for some students and parents these values make the institution unique and desirable (Auer, 2000). Neylon (1996) described collaborative efforts by personnel at Dominican colleges

to ensure the transmission of their Roman Catholic heritage and the spirit and charism of their founder. As one of the oldest charisms within the Catholic church, the Augustinian tradition had a significant impact on the teaching and the quality of relationships at both Villanova University and Merrimack College (Shaw, 1991).

Several scholars have correlated Catholic identity with the quality of the relationships with the sponsoring religious congregations (Auer, 2000; Benne, 2001; Burrows, 1999; Danner, 1997; Devlin, 1998; Dodge, 1991; Introcaso, 1996; Morey, 1995; Murphy, 1991; Neylon, 1996; Salvaterra, 1991; Shaw, 1991). These authors stressed the role of the faculty in ensuring that the values of the sponsors are understood and integrated into the curriculum and campus life. Neylon (1996) speculated that, without providing faculty with a common and clear understanding of the unique tradition, Dominican Catholic education (the focus of her study) risked becoming fragmented and secularized. Likewise, Salvaterra (1991) found that a lack of clarity and engagement by the sponsoring congregation in one of the institutions she studied contributed to the weakening of a Catholic identity in that college. Auer (2000) highlighted the role of the local sponsoring religious congregation in on-going faculty development, assessment, and evaluation of the impact of the tradition and implementation of structures for accountability. Devlin (1998) discovered that the legacy of the Christian Brothers helped a college in the midst of significant cultural transition to maintain its Catholic identity.

Holtschneider and Morey (2000) surveyed all presidents of colleges and universities in the United States sponsored by women and men religious and the congregational leaders of the sponsoring congregations (n=134). Seventy percent of the presidents and 65% of the congregational leaders responded. Ninety-eight percent of the

respondents indicated that the declining number of religious of the sponsoring congregations has had a significant impact on the colleges in terms of staffing, leadership, and representations on boards of trustees. After analyzing the variety of ways in which the relationships between the colleges and the religious congregations have changed, Holtschneider and Morey concluded that some colleges will probably become more secular, a few will find ways to preserve the legacy of the sponsoring congregation, and most will become more generically or universally Catholic and less connected with the legacy of the sponsors. According to these researchers, colleges with religious traditions that are “more amenable and consonant with lay experience will have an advantage” in retaining a “congregationally-specific culture and spirituality” (p. 32).

Holtschneider and Morey’s (2000) research drew strong reactions from a number of other researchers in the field who pointed out the distinctive and rich contributions of the various religious congregations (Hayes, 2000b; Hellwig, 2000a), the marketing appeal of the diverse congregations (Hayes, 2000b), and the resilience and resourcefulness of women religious in establishing first-rate educational institutions (Vale, 2000). Researchers enumerated programs which individual religious congregations and associations of colleges sponsored by related religious congregations have initiated to ensure the transmission of the congregational legacy (Reinhart, 2000; Vale, 2000). Responding to their critiques, Holtschneider and Morey (2000) called attention to the distinction between “teaching and learning.” They reiterated their conviction that institutions which desire to remain Catholic must not only teach the congregational legacy but “create the circumstances under which lay colleagues

internalize spiritualities and accept personal responsibility for the religious culture of the institution” (p. 64).

The role of the sponsoring religious congregations emerged as a common theme in a study in which Morey and Piderit (2006) interviewed 124 senior administrators at 33 Catholic colleges and universities. More than half of the administrators stated that the congregational heritage was appealing, inclusive, and expressive of the institution’s uniqueness. Other administrators, although grateful for the congregational heritage, preferred to focus more directly on the Catholic culture, with less emphasis on the sponsoring congregations. Believing that it is unlikely that there will be a presence of sponsoring religious beyond the next quarter century, Morey and Piderit cautioned that “the decision to emphasize congregational identity and heritage proves inconsistent and unworkable” (p. 208).

David Hassel (1983) provided a detailed analysis of the history of religious congregations in church-sponsored higher education. In addition to describing the evolution of institutional incorporation, which separated the founding religious groups from ownership and absolute control over the institutions they had begun, and the variety of governing relationships that resulted, Hassel also specified the varying degrees of involvement with which the founding groups entered into the life of the institution: (a) the number of trustees maintained by the founding religious group, and the strength with which these members support and live the denominational faith; (b) the number of chief academic and administrative offices held by the founding religious group; (c) “the depth of presence” offered on the campus by the founding religious group; (d) the degree of psychological and spiritual support offered by the local, regional, national, or global

church through the members of the founding religious group; and, (e) the type of financial support provided directly to the institution by the founding religious group (p. 385). Resulting from these variables are four predominant relationship types: (a) the patriarch – who maintains vertical authority and control; (b) the umpire – who maintains neutrality, but horizontal authority; (c) the friend – who hopes to maintain influence through personal or individual presence; and, (d) the dutch uncle – who attempts “to keep all three models of university or college authority in a dynamic balance that cannot be achieved with the previous three models” (p. 396).

Burtchaell (1991), Johnson (1992), Mardsen (1994a), and O’Brien (1994) have traced the declining influence of religious congregation-sponsored higher education. Among the root causes, these authors identified: (a) rapid pluralization of American society, (b) professionalization of the faculty, (c) declining support among sponsoring denominational congregations, (d) increasing dependence on public and federal funding and, (e) decreasing vocations to the founding religious group. Despite this decline Hassel (1983), identified important factors of the founding religious groups contributions to the distinctive identity of Catholic higher education, which were: (a) to work for the continuity of a distinct spirit, (b) to offer psychological and spiritual support, (c) to provide pastoral education and, (d) to engage in discrete leadership.

Summary

The history of American higher education revealed that most colleges were originally connected with Protestant churches and aimed to promote the mission of these churches. Gradually, the majority of institutions disengaged from their founding churches and became secularized. Catholic colleges, founded some 100 years after other

American institutions of higher education, aimed to promote the mission of the Catholic Church and eventually helped to establish and maintain a Catholic sub-culture within American society.

Despite differences of opinion about a variety of issues, Catholic identity was largely uncontested until the 1950s and 1960s. Staffed by priests and members of religious congregations, Catholic colleges and universities maintained distinctive external symbols, rituals, and religious practices. An integrated liberal arts curriculum solidly rooted in the philosophical and theological vision of Thomas Aquinas provided curricular coherence. Over time, the Thomistic tradition disintegrated, ordained priests and religious men and women left higher education ministry for other forms of life and service, boards of trustees became laicized, and Catholic colleges and universities concentrated major resources on the pursuit of academic excellence. In the process, questions arose about the Catholic identity of the institution.

The literature reflected a preoccupation with Catholic identity and many questions about whether the institutions could remain distinctively Catholic. By 1995, there was a shift in the literature with more evidence of initiatives aimed at promoting Catholic identity. At the same time, the influence of sponsoring religious congregations on the colleges and universities they founded gained increased attention. Although some scholars speculated that the distinctive charisms and traditions of individual congregations might disappear in favor of a more generic Catholic identity, the majority of writers asserted the significance of the traditions of the sponsors.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Restatement of the Purpose

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the De La Salle Christian Brothers' personal experiences of Catholic identity in higher education in the United States as the sponsoring congregation of these campuses. With an aging and diminishing population of Christian Brothers present in the colleges and universities that they sponsor, the rich diversity of the experiences of the Christian Brothers regarding Catholic identity were those voices that this research intended to capture. Initially, the researcher explored the Brothers' personal characterizations of Catholic identity. Then, this study examined the Brothers' personal experiences of Catholic identity in higher education from an historical, as well as a current day, perspective. Finally, the researcher invited the Brothers to envision the future of Catholic identity in higher education.

Research Design

Qualitative Research

This study of the Brothers' experiences of Catholic identity was conducted using a qualitative grounded theory approach (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008; Creswell, 2007) through online interview methodology. The research purpose and the related research questions required that the researcher deduce and explore the meanings that participants attribute to their experiences through a qualitative research design (Glaser, 2004; Jones, Kriflik, & Zanko, 2005). Rubin and Rubin (2005) stated that qualitative research is effective in situations where the researcher is endeavoring to achieve a full, deep

understanding of the experiences of the participants, and attempting to recreate events in which the researcher did not participate.

The qualitative approach to the interview of participants is conducive to open ended questions and follow-up discussions with the goal of developing themes from the data (Bloomberg, 2007; Creswell, 2007). In a qualitative approach to research, the researcher often makes knowledge assertions supported by constructive perspectives (Creswell, 2003). A constructive view, where processes are favored over end products, includes the various implications of individual understanding and the implications and understandings are collectively created with the aim of evolving a pattern or theory.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) proposed that qualitative inquiry progress away from descriptive studies into the area of explanatory theoretical frameworks. The theoretical rationale of this study incorporated the constructivist viewpoint, which assumes that realities are “socially and experientially based, dependent for their form and content on the individual persons or groups holding the constructions” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 206). Along with the constructivist perspective, this study incorporated the grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1978, 2007) to produce a broad-based description of the Brothers’ experience of Catholic identity.

Grounded theory utilizes theoretical categories and their attributes through coding the data and theoretical sampling (Charmaz, 2006). This approach is “unencumbered by explicit expectations about what the researcher might find, or by personal beliefs and philosophies” (Pole & Lampard, 2002, p. 206). This principle supports the use of grounded theory as a tool for analyzing social phenomena when little is known about the situation under investigation (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Martin & Taylor, 1986;

Sarantakos, 2005), that is, the personal experiences of the Brothers in regard to Catholic identity in higher education.

Virtual Research

This study was a qualitative design using computer-mediated communication (CMC) that allowed for computer users to interact directly with each other using text via keyboards. Asynchronous CMC, the feature of most email messaging systems, allows users to type extended messages that then electronically transmit to recipients who read, reply, print, forward, and file them at any time they choose (Mann & Stewart, 2001). Using an asynchronous CMC, the interviewer of this study was afforded some control with regard to the nature and content of the Brother's interactions. The potential of CMC has been recognized as an effective interviewing medium (O'Connor & Madge, 2000). The virtuality of the medium offers possibilities for extending the range of participants beyond those who are available for face-to-face interviewing (Kennedy, 1998).

Advantages to online data collection include widening the scope of research by offering an electronic extension to familiar research techniques. The asynchronous nature allows for reflection time that would be less available in a face-to-face session (Seidman, 1998). CMC is a practical and cost-efficient way of conducting in-depth interviews with individuals or groups who are geographically distant (Cohen, 1996).

Research Setting

This study investigated the Christian Brother's experiences of Catholic identity in higher education in the United States. At the time of this research, there were seven Lasallian colleges and universities in the United States/Toronto Region of the Christian Brothers, six of which were located in the United States. The University of Bethlehem,

located in the country of Palestine, is sponsored by the United States/Toronto Region but was not included in this study, the focus of which was higher education in the United States. The United States/Toronto Region is comprised of four districts: District of Eastern North America, Midwest District, New Orleans-Santa Fe District, and San Francisco District (Figure 1).

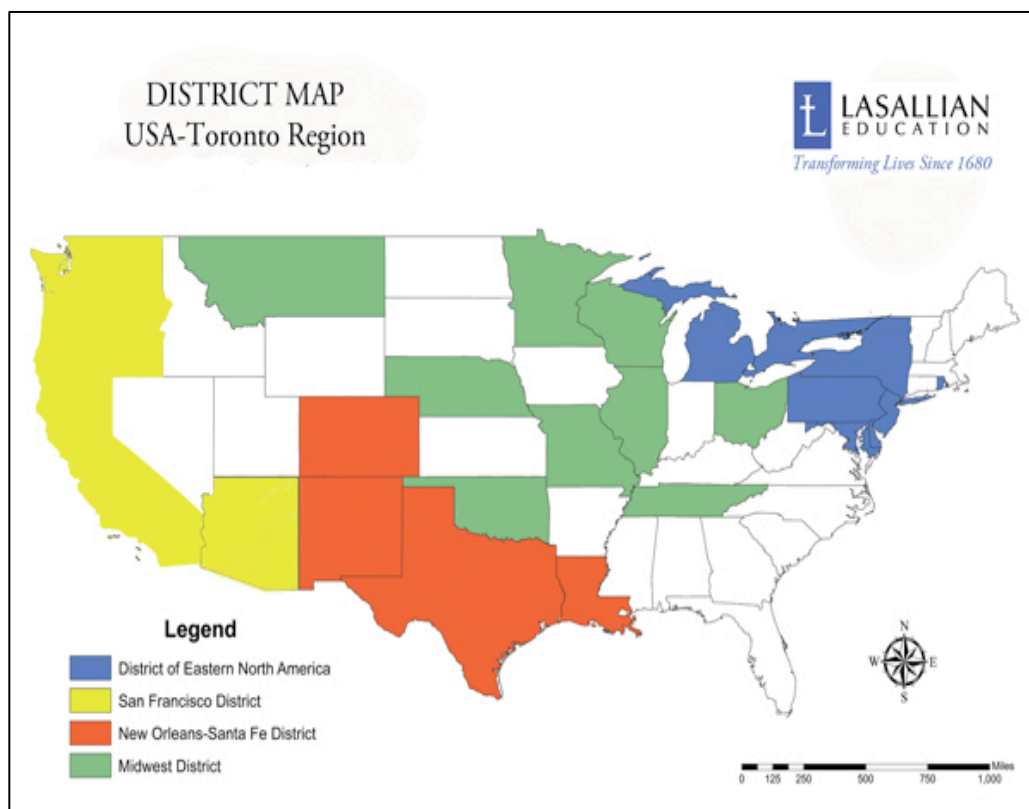


Figure 1. District map of the United States/Toronto Region of the De La Salle Christian Brothers. Retrieved from <http://www.lasallian.info/template/page.cfm?id=112> on February 28, 2012.

Each district is led by a Brother Visitor who “is the one primarily responsible for the District” (Rule of the Christian Brothers, 2008, p. 129).

In each district, the Brothers sponsor colleges/universities, high schools, middle schools, retreat centers, and a variety of other educational ministries. The districts and the institutions of higher education that they sponsor are as follows:

- District of Eastern North America – LaSalle University (Philadelphia, PA), and Manhattan College (Bronx, NY).
- Midwest District – Christian Brothers University (Memphis, TN), Lewis University (Romeoville, IL), and Saint Mary’s University (Winona, MN).
- San Francisco District – Saint Mary’s College of California (Moraga, CA).

In 2010-2011, the Brothers sponsored 4 elementary schools, 13 middle schools, 6 middle/high schools, 48 high schools, and 6 institutions of higher education in the United States (Table 1), the target population of this study (Christian Brothers Conference, 2011).

Table 1

Lasallian Colleges and Universities in the United States

Institution	City/State	Established
Christian Brothers University	Memphis, TN	1871
La Salle University	Philadelphia, PA	1863
Lewis University	Romeoville, IL	1932
Manhattan College	Bronx, NY	1853
Saint Mary's College of California	Moraga, CA	1863
Saint Mary’s University	Winona, MN	1912

Note: Christian Brothers Conference (December, 2011)

Population

The participants of this research were Christian Brothers assigned to colleges and universities in the United States that are sponsored by the Brothers. At these institutions, 77 Christian Brothers served in one of the following capacities: administration (includes

Presidents, Vice Presidents, Deans of Students, and other Cabinet level positions), faculty (full- or part-time), and professional staff (needing an advanced degree to hold the position) (Table 2).

Table 2

Christian Brothers at Lasallian Colleges and Universities in the United States

Institution	Administration	Faculty	Staff
Christian Brothers University	2	5	3
La Salle University	2	14	10
Lewis University	1	10	1
Manhattan College	1	6	1
Saint Mary's College of California	1	6	5
Saint Mary's University	2	4	3
Total:	9	45	23

Note: Christian Brothers Conference (December, 2010)

Initially, the researcher contacted each of the Brother Visitors in the United States/Toronto Region via U.S. mail (Appendix A) seeking their permission to conduct research with the Brothers from their District. A copy of the letter signed by the Brother Visitor granting permission to conduct the study was returned via U.S. mail to the researcher (Appendix B). The researcher received permission to conduct the study with Brothers in their District from the Brother Visitors of the Midwest, New Orleans-Sante Fe, and San Francisco Districts, but not from the Brother Visitor of the District of Eastern North America. Upon receiving the Brother Visitor's permission, the researcher emailed (Appendix C) the Director of each of the Brothers' communities at each of the institutions of higher education participating in the study seeking an opportunity to meet with the Brothers assigned to the institution as a way to introduce the researcher and the

study. The email address for the Director of each Brothers' community was obtained by contacting the central office of each District. Included as an attachment to each email to the Director was a copy of the letter (Appendix B) signed by the Visitor granting permission and endorsing the study. When permission was granted by the Director, the researcher traveled to three of the four institutions and introduced himself and the purpose of the study to the Brothers assigned to that institution. One Director never responded to the researcher's request to visit the institution. Fontana and Frey (1994) indicated that successful qualitative interviewing depends upon the interviewer's developing rapport with participants. By traveling to the various institutions and through subsequent interactions, the researcher believed that the participants would come to trust his sincerity and motivation, thus preparing them to share in-depth insights into their private and social worlds (Mann & Stewart, 2001). Early evidence of CMC interviewing suggests that, as in conventional research, the participants' commitment to the research purposes is a paramount factor for ensuring continuity of communication (Mann & Stewart, 2000).

At each meeting with the Brothers' communities, the researcher provided an overview of the study and asked for their participation. If a Brother agreed to participate in the study, he was provided a consent form (Appendix D) and a contact form (Appendix E) to complete and return to the researcher before he departed the meeting. The contact form contained demographic questions, such as number of years as a Christian Brother, number of years assigned to an institution of higher education, and number of years assigned to his present institution, as well as a request for the participant's email address. If a Brother was not present during the researcher's visit and for the institution the

researcher was not able to visit in person, the researcher emailed (Appendix F) an invitation to the Brother seeking his participation. As a result, 29 of the 77 Brothers agreed to participate in this study and the researcher followed-up with an email thanking him for his participation (Appendix G). However, 20 Brothers responded to the initial interview questions and actually participated in the study.

In keeping with the University of San Francisco policy, a request to conduct this study, with full explanation of the study, was submitted to the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRBPHS) and was approved (Appendix H). Since the Brothers' responses to Catholic identity in higher education was likely be a sensitive topic for the Brothers, confidentiality was critical in this study. Pseudonyms were provided for all participants.

Role of the Researcher

Qualitative research is interpretive research and, as such, it was important for the researcher to examine the biases, values, and judgments that he may have had toward his subject matter (Creswell, 2003). The researcher's interest in studying Christian Brothers' experiences of Catholic identity in higher education arose from his work with the Christian Brothers over the past 20 years. Throughout these years, he witnessed the tension of living out the sometimes conflicting perceptions of Catholic identity embodied by the Christian Brothers. Being an instrument of the research, it was critical that he be aware of his sentiments, values, and judgments related to Catholic identity in higher education in order to avoid, as rigorously as possible, any bias in the data collection and analysis.

Certain characteristics, collectively termed theoretical sensitivity, are essential for generating grounded theory. Glaser (2004), Glaser and Strauss (1967), and Strauss and Corbin (1998) emphasized that the researcher needs to remain open and flexible, patient, and detached from preconceived ideas. In addition, the researcher needs to have insight and the ability to conceptualize. Piantanida et al. (2004) viewed “theoretical sensitivity/wisdom not as a methodological technique or strategy, but rather as a way of *being* in the inquiry, a state of mind that strives to be as fully and completely attentive as possible to the phenomenon one wants to understand” (p. 336, emphasis in the original). In line with Strauss and Corbin (1998) and Piantanida et al. (2004), who acknowledged that the researcher brings his professional and personal experiences to the research process, this researcher did not attempt to separate his background and experience from the research process. Based on familiarity with the Christian Brothers and the Lasallian tradition, the researcher invited the respondents to clarify and amplify their insights and perceptions.

Interviews

When the study was conceptualized, the researcher intended to utilize an online blog in which to interview the Brother participants. However, at the beginning of the data collection process, it became apparent to him that the confidentiality promised to the participants could not be insured due to technical limitations of the blog. If the blog had been utilized as originally intended, the Brother participants would have been privy to each others’ responses, which would have compromised the confidentiality of the participants.

Consequently, in an attempt to insure participant confidentiality, the researcher used email as the medium for this virtual research, providing him with the ability to correspond individually and confidentially with each of the participants without the other participants viewing each others' responses. Depending on the responses, the researcher asked follow-up questions for further clarification to ascertain in-depth information on particular entries (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

Interview questions related to research questions #1 and #2 were emailed to each participant the first week, interview questions related to research question #3 were emailed the second week, and interview questions related to research question #4 were emailed the third week. The responses emailed back to the researcher were asynchronous, allowing the participants to answer the emailed questions at any time (Douglass, Little, & Smith, 2006). The researcher was available for reply and follow-up responses for one week after the final emailing of the interview questions related to research question #4.

The research questions and the corresponding interview questions were:

1. How do De La Salle Christian Brothers characterize Catholic identity in higher education?
 - a. Please describe what Catholic identity in higher education means to you.
2. Historically, what have been the De La Salle Christian Brothers' personal experiences of Catholic identity in higher education?
 - a. As a Christian Brother, when you were first assigned to an institution of higher education, what was your experience of Catholic identity?
 - b. As a Christian Brother, when you were first assigned to an institution of higher education, did your institution meet your conception of Catholic

identity? If so, how did it meet your expectations? If not, how did it not meet your expectations?

- c. Please share a personal story that captures your experience of Catholic identity when you were first assigned to an institution of higher education as a Christian Brother.

3. Currently, what are the De La Salle Christian Brothers' personal experiences of Catholic identity in higher education?

- a. Today, what is your experience of Catholic identity in higher education?
- b. Since you began your service in higher education, how, if at all, has your experience of Catholic identity changed?
- c. From your experience, what is the greatest contribution being made to strengthen the Catholic identity in higher education?
- d. Please share a personal story that captures your experience of Catholic identity today in higher education.

4. With regard to the future, how do De La Salle Christian Brothers envision Catholic identity in higher education?

- a. In higher education, what will Catholic identity look like in 5 years? In 10 years? In 20 years?
- b. What do you see as the greatest challenge facing higher education in regard to Catholic identity?

Follow-up questions, as needed, were asked of the participants by the researcher, thereby creating a thread for the emails. The threads represented a series of messages that pertained to each research question (Kozinets, 2011).

Data Collection

The researcher emailed all participants the initial set of interview questions indicating that the interview questions had been posted to the online blog (Appendix I). However, when it became apparent that the confidentiality of the participants was not guaranteed, the researcher individually emailed the participants the initial set of interview questions (Appendix J). The participants responded to the following interview questions, which gathered data for research questions #1 and #2:

1. Please describe what Catholic identity in higher education means to you.
2. As a Christian Brother, when you were first assigned to an institution of higher education, what was your experience of Catholic identity?
3. As a Christian Brother, when you were first assigned to an institution of higher education, did your institution meet your description of Catholic identity? If so, how did it meet your expectations? If it did not, how did it not meet your expectations?
4. Please share a personal story that captures your experience of Catholic identity when you were first assigned to an institution of higher education as a Christian Brother.

The asynchronous nature of this study allowed for the participant to answer these interview questions at anytime. The researcher checked his email several times a day to read the participants' entries and to send follow-up questions when the researcher needed further clarification. Four days later, the researcher sent a reminder email (Appendix K) to the participants encouraging their participation.

One week following the first email containing the interview questions, the researcher sent an email to the participants (Appendix L) with the following questions that gathered data for research question #3:

1. Today, what is your experience of Catholic identity in higher education?
2. Since you began your service in higher education, how, if at all, has your experience of Catholic identity changed?
3. From your experience, what is the greatest contribution being made to strengthen the Catholic identity in higher education?
4. Please share a personal story that captures your experience of Catholic identity today in higher education.

The asynchronous nature of this study allowed for the participant to answer these interview questions at anytime. The researcher checked his email several times a day to read the participants' entries and to email follow-up questions when the researcher needed further clarification. All responses to the interview questions and to any follow-up questions were available only to the participant and the researcher. Four days later, the researcher sent a reminder email (Appendix M) to the participants encouraging their participation.

One week following the second email containing the second set of interview questions, the researcher sent an email to the participants (Appendix N) with the following questions that gathered data for research question #4:

1. In higher education, what will Catholic identity look like in 5 years? In 10 years? In 20 years?

2. What do you see as the greatest challenge facing higher education in regard to the Catholic identity?

The asynchronous nature of this study allowed for the participant to answer these interview questions at anytime. The researcher monitored his email inbox several times a day to read the participants' entries and to send follow-up questions when the researcher needed further clarification. All responses to the interview questions and to any follow-up questions were visible to only the participant and the researcher. Four days later, the researcher sent a reminder email (Appendix O) encouraging their participation.

On the seventh day of the final week of participants' having the last set of interview questions, the researcher emailed (Appendix P) an announcement that indicated the closure of the study at midnight Pacific Standard Time. Within the following week, the researcher emailed a note of thanks to all participants (Appendix Q), as well as his willingness to electronically share the results of the study upon individual request.

At the conclusion of the study, the researcher cut and pasted all entries into a Word document by participant and all emails were deleted. In addition, he cut and pasted all entries into Word documents as they related to each research question. Each Word document was saved using the pseudonym assigned by the researcher to the participant. These documents were also printed for use only by the researcher for data analysis. When not in use, all documents were placed in a locked cabinet.

Data Analysis

Consistent with the grounded theory method, the data analysis process involved several simultaneous activities. The participants responded to the interview questions in emails, which alleviated the need for transcription. After the participants had answered

each interview question, the responses were copied to a Word document. The researcher created a Word document for each of the four research questions and each participant response was identified by their pseudonym. The interview question responses were read by the researcher several times at the completion of the interview process to identify and code themes related to the characteristics and experiences of the Brothers in regard to Catholic identity. Discrete steps in the process are explicated below.

Coding helped the researcher to discover the various levels of meaning, both explicit and implicit, in the data (Glaser, 1996; Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Several authors have suggested techniques for coding text (Charmaz, 2000, 2002; Dick, 2002; Glaser, 1996, 2002, 2004; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Piantanida et al., 2004; Strauss & Corbin, 1994, 1998). Based on their suggestions, the following steps guided the process of data analysis. Initially, the researcher copied the individual participant's responses to all the interview questions into a Word document and saved this document using the assigned pseudonym. This provided the researcher a copy of the data after the emails had been deleted.

When beginning the data analysis, the researcher copied each interview question response to a Word document created for each research question. These files were named ResearchQuestion1, ResearchQuestion2, ResearchQuestion3, and ResearchQuestion4. Research questions #2, #3, and #4, had several interview questions, so the Word document for those research questions contained the participants' responses for all the interview questions associated with that research question. The participants' responses were identified with the assigned pseudonym.

Commencing with research question #1, the researcher opened the ResearchQuestion1 Word document and read the participants' responses to the interview question line-by-line in search of key themes or patterns (ideas, concepts, behaviors, interactions, incidents, terminology or phrases used). These units of text (words, phrases, sentences) were highlighted in the text to identify key phrases and statements that were relevant to the research question. The researcher made notes in the margins of emerging ideas or patterns and how he was interpreting the data. The participants' responses were re-read several times to identify themes that emerged from the data, focusing on the concepts that occurred repetitively and with the greatest explanatory power. The common or related themes were grouped into categories using words or key phrases to define what the category stood for. Once the categories had been defined, the researcher copied and pasted the relevant text into an Excel spreadsheet that included columns for category, code, and narrative text. With the data in the Excel spreadsheet, the researcher reflected and thought about how the categories fit and related together. This level of analysis of the participants' responses to the interview question allowed the researcher to answer research question #1. The researcher repeated this process with the data found in the ResearchQuestion2, ResearchQuestion3, and ResearchQuestion4 Word documents to answer research questions #2, #3 and #4 respectively.

Validity and Reliability

According to Creswell (2003), the validity and vigor of qualitative research is supported by "determining whether the findings are accurate from the viewpoint of the researcher, the participants, or the readers of an account" (p. 195). Researchers must be aware of possible threats to the validity of qualitative research, such as insufficient

interviewing measures, transcription and coding errors, incorrect descriptions, and researcher bias (Creswell, 2003, 2007; Robson, 2002). Using the participants' emailed responses, the researcher did not have to transcribe the participants' responses to ensure accuracy. Rather, the researcher cut and pasted the participants' responses directly from the emails to a Word document. Therefore, there was no need for the participants to review their interview transcripts for accuracy.

The researcher validated the interview questions with two Christian Brothers. The Brothers examined the interview questions as appropriate means to answer the research questions. Based on their feedback, two interview questions were modified for increased clarification.

Background of the Researcher

As a current employee at a college in the United States sponsored by the Christian Brothers, as well as a former employee at secondary schools sponsored by the Christian Brothers, the researcher was familiar with the Brothers and the Lasallian tradition. The researcher had also participated in the Buttimer Institute of Lasallian Studies and the Lasallian Leadership Institute. The Buttimer Institute "provides participants with a deeper understanding and appreciation of the Lasallian charism through in-depth study of John Baptist de La Salle's personal journey and the Lasallian spirituality and pedagogy" (Christian Brothers Conference, 2012, n.p.). Additionally, the Lasallian Leadership Institute "integrates and promotes the Lasallian heritage in the personal and professional lives of ministry leaders as future catalysts of the Lasallian mission" (n.p.). Both of these Institutes provided the researcher with a deeper understanding of the Christian Brothers, as well as an opportunity to interact on a personal level with the Brother participants and

presenters. The researcher is also a graduate of a Lasallian high school and, with the exception of a four-year interruption while attending undergraduate studies, he has been associated with the Brothers and their ministries for the past 32 years.

Limitations to the Study

The fact that the researcher was educated by the Christian Brothers in a secondary school, for the past 20 years was employed at secondary schools in Michigan and New York, and is currently employed at an institution of higher education sponsored by the Brothers, may have potentially limited this research. The researcher's familiarity with the Brothers may have limited his objectivity in his approach to the research study, the data analysis and interpretation of the data, and the reporting of findings and conclusions. It was the intent that the researcher's background and experience would have improved, rather than limited, the quality and integrity of the study.

The Christian Brothers are an aging religious congregation with the average age being 68 years old. Their age may have prevented some Brothers from utilizing the technology and methodology used in this research, as they may not have had access to a computer that would have prevented them from participating in the research.

Conducting interviews online has both advantages and disadvantages. The disadvantage of online research is that the responses will "lack inflection, body language, and the many nuances that often communicate more vividly than words" (Merriam, 2009, p. 158). Online interviews also limit the ability of the researcher to assess responses through gestures, mannerisms, or feedback (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998).

The scope of the study was limited to colleges and universities in the United States sponsored by the De La Salle Christian Brothers, thereby excluding other colleges

and universities sponsored by the Brothers throughout the world. Additionally, the scope of the study did not include colleges and universities in the United States sponsored by other religious congregations. The resultant sample size was small, consisting of only six of the 246 Catholic colleges and universities located throughout the United States.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Overview

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the De La Salle Christian Brothers' personal experiences of Catholic identity in higher education in the United States as the sponsoring congregation of these campuses. With an aging and diminishing population of Christian Brothers present in the colleges and universities that they sponsor, the rich diversity of the experiences of the Christian Brothers regarding Catholic identity are those voices that this research intended to capture. Initially, the researcher explored the Brothers' personal characterizations of Catholic identity. Then, this study examined the Brothers' personal experiences of Catholic identity in higher education from an historical, as well as a current-day perspective. Finally, the researcher invited the Brothers to envision the future of Catholic identity in higher education.

The findings for this study were analyzed according to the following research questions:

1. How do De La Salle Christian Brothers characterize Catholic identity in higher education?
2. Historically, what have been the De La Salle Christian Brothers' personal experiences of Catholic identity in higher education?
3. Currently, what are the De La Salle Christian Brothers' personal experiences of Catholic identity in higher education?
4. With regard to the future, how do De La Salle Christian Brothers envision Catholic identity in higher education?

In this chapter, the researcher will report on the demographics of the respondents and address the findings for each research question.

Demographics

The interview questions were emailed to 29 De La Salle Christian Brothers from the Midwest and San Francisco provinces assigned to institutions of higher education in the United States who had returned the Informed Consent Form (Appendix D) to the researcher. A total of 20 Brothers, or 69% of the initial sample, responded to the interview questions. The demographic questions investigated characteristics of the Brothers, including their current or most recent position at the institution of higher education, if they were currently retired, the number of years as a Brother, the number of years that the Brother had been assigned to an institution of higher education, the number of institutions of higher education the Brother had been assigned to, and if the Brother had ever been assigned to a secondary school. All 20 participants answered all the demographic questions.

The respondents averaged 50.2 years of being a Brother, with the least being a Brother for 17 years and the maximum being a Brother for 75 years. The majority, 13 of the 20 participants or 65%, had been a Brother for between 40 to 59 years (Figure 2). On average, the respondents had been at an institution of higher education for 22.2 years, with one Brother assigned to higher education for 61 years. Nine of the Brothers had been assigned to higher education institutions for 0-19 years, as compared to an equal number assigned for 20-39 years (Figure 3). A majority of the Brothers (12 participants or 60%) had been assigned to only one institution of higher education, only one Brother was assigned to more than three institutions, and the remainder had been assigned to two

institutions. In total, the Brothers were assigned to institutions of higher education for 443 years.

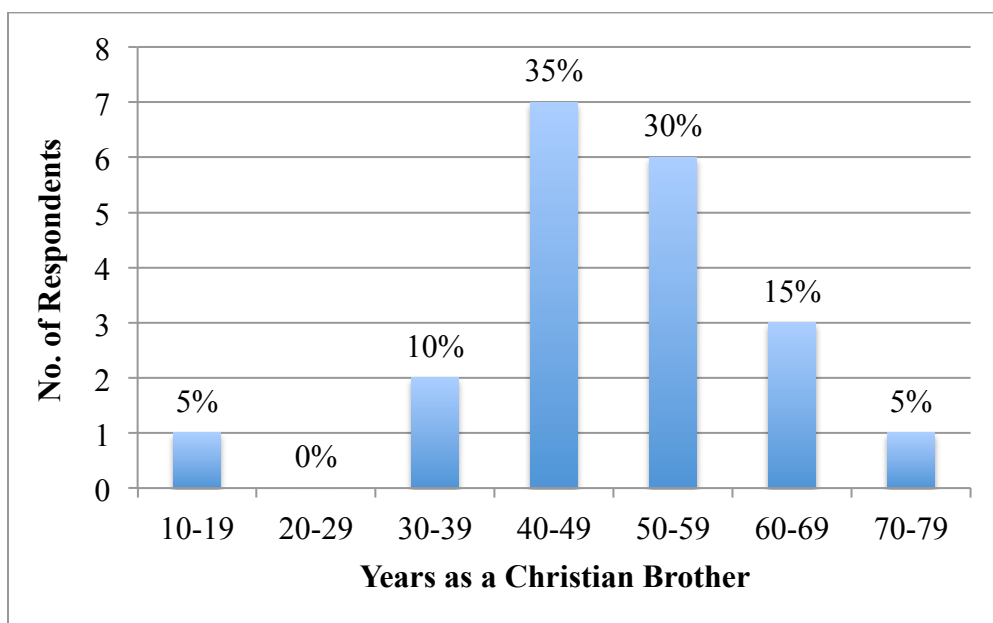


Figure 2. Number of years as a Christian Brother.

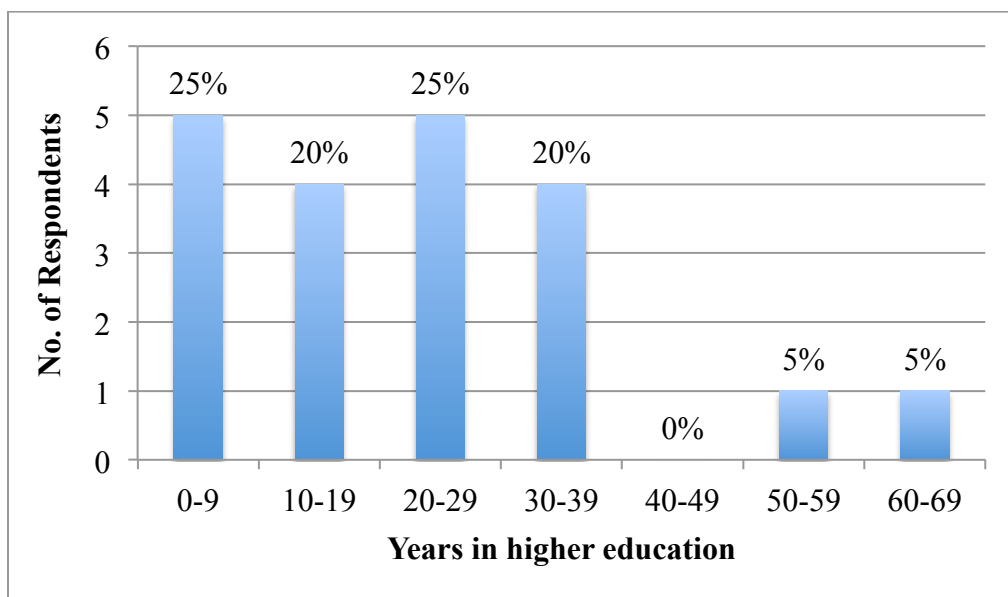


Figure 3. Number of years as a Christian Brother in higher education.

At their current institution of higher education, the Brothers were classified as faculty (full- or part-time), professional staff (needing an advanced degree to hold the position), or administrator (includes President, Vice Presidents, Deans of Students, and other Cabinet level positions). Seven of the 20 Brother respondents were retired and, of these seven retired Brothers, five had previously been faculty and the other two had previously been administrators (Figure 4). Of the non-retired Brothers, six were faculty, four were administrators, and three were staff (Figure 5).

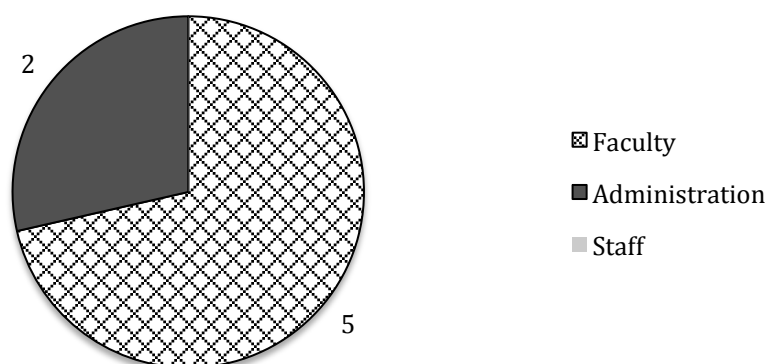


Figure 4. Last assigned positions of retired Brother participants.

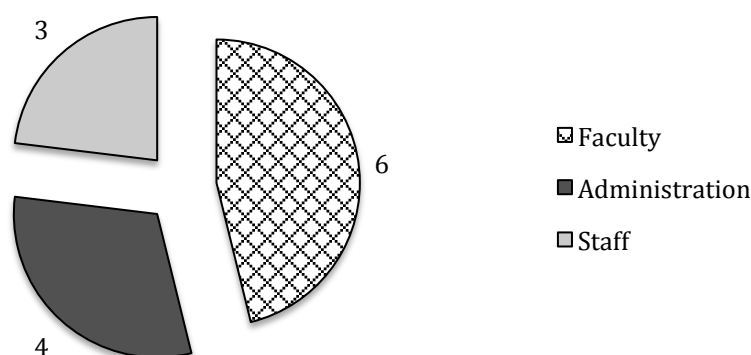


Figure 5. Current assigned positions of non-retired Brother participants.

All of the Brother respondents had been assigned to a secondary school. On average, a Brother was assigned to a secondary school for 15.5 years, with a range of years from 4 to 52 (Figure 6). In total, the respondents were assigned to secondary education for 309 years.

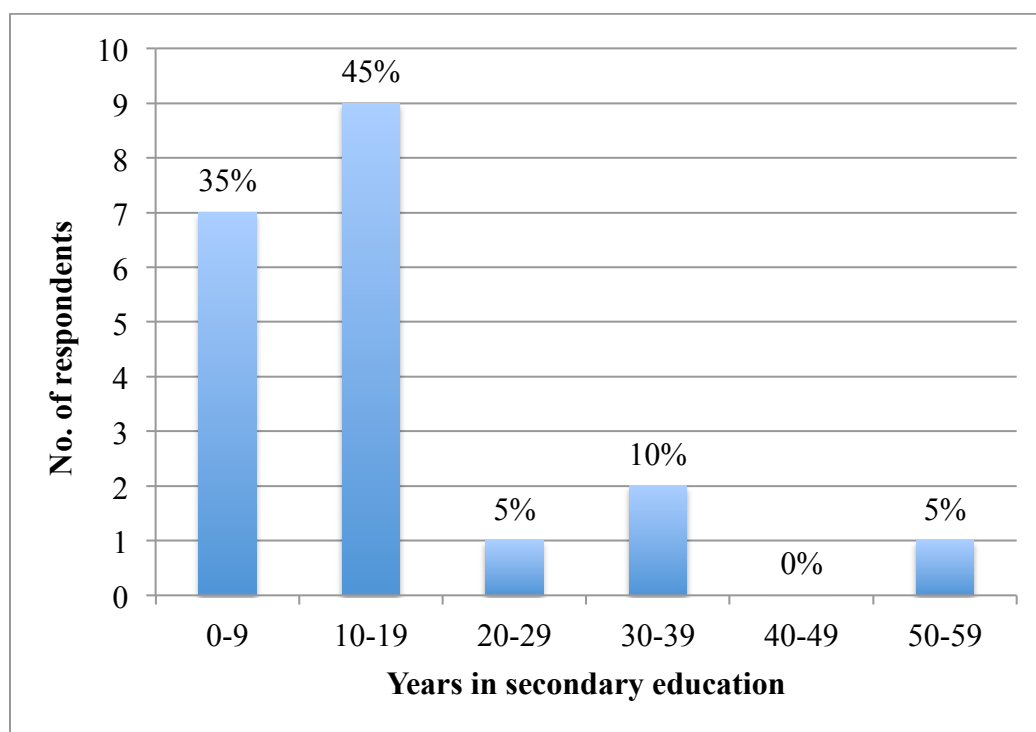


Figure 6. Number of years as a Christian Brother in secondary education.

Summary of Demographic Variables

As a group, the 20 respondents had been Christian Brothers for over 1,000 years. The average respondent had been a Brother for 50.2 years and, on average, had been assigned to an institution of higher education for 22.2 years. Forty-five percent of the respondents had been assigned to higher education between 20 and 39 years and another 45% between 1 and 19 years. The majority was non-retired, with only seven respondents identifying as retired. Three Brothers were classified as staff, 11 (55%) were faculty and

six were administrators. Twelve of the Brothers had been assigned to only one institution of higher education. Of the other eight respondents, only one had been assigned to more than three institutions of higher education. All twenty respondents had been assigned to secondary schools, with an average of 15.5 years assigned to these schools. Sixteen of the respondents (70%) had been assigned to a secondary school for as many as 19 years.

Approach to Reporting the Findings

Throughout this chapter, in reporting the responses of the participants, the researcher reported the findings through the voices of the Brothers. As noted in Chapters I and II, the aging and diminishing population of Christian Brothers in the colleges and universities that they sponsor necessitated this approach, that is, to capture their individual voices regarding the rich diversity of their experiences of Catholic identity in higher education.

Research Question 1

The first research question sought to ascertain how the Brothers characterized Catholic identity in higher education. Participants were asked to describe what Catholic identity meant to them and findings were obtained from all 20 participants. The three major characteristics – Catholic ethos, academics, and campus life – and the themes that emerged related to these characteristics are listed in Table 3. Each of the characteristics and their accompanying themes will then be reported from the perspective of the voices of the Brother participants.

Catholic Ethos

The Catholic ethos and the related themes were noted by the Brothers as the common characteristic used to describe what Catholic identity in higher education meant to them. The Catholic ethos was described by the participants through their understanding

Table 3

Characteristics and Themes Emerging From Findings Relating to Research Question 1

Characteristics	Themes
Catholic ethos	Roman Catholic Church School mission Gospel values Sacraments Religious presence
Academics	Theology/Religious Studies department Curriculum/courses Faculty and staff hire/composition
Campus life	Student admissions Campus ministry Extra-curricular activities Religious symbols

of the Roman Catholic Church, the mission of the institution, the values found in the Gospel, the sacraments, and the presence of religious within the institution's community. Two Brothers described what Catholic ethos meant to them. Brother Brian stated that Catholic identity in higher education is identified as an institution of higher learning with a Catholic ethos. To him, this "means that the mission and identity of the university must reflect a Catholic ethos and values."¹ Similarly, Brother George stated that Catholic identity in higher education means "impacting an education that encompasses Catholic values and ethos."

¹ Throughout this chapter, direct quotations of participants are located in the data collection document entitled *Interviews*, as cited in the Reference section.

Roman Catholic Church

Brother Adam described a truly Catholic university as one that “reflects the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church” and works closely with the local bishop as “he [the bishop] is the one who allows the school to work as a Catholic institution within his diocese.” Brother Raymond went further by stating that the university “should have the permission of the local Catholic bishop.” “An institution,” according to Brother Mason, “is rooted in its commitment as a branch or member of the Roman Catholic Church” but should present its Catholicism as “sensitively, discreetly and professionally as possible.” A Catholic university makes “no attempt to soft-pedal identity as a religiously affiliated school,” a route many colleges and universities have gone in the view of Brother Kyle. He went on to state that Catholic identity is not something “owned by a diocese or even the Church.” Rather, Catholic identity is “organic and is becoming,” as is his understanding of the Kingdom of God, namely that it is “already but not yet” and Catholic identity is the “not yet.” Catholic identity, for Brother Larry, was an “opening to the catholicity and richness of a tradition, a critical dialogue with a global 2,000 year heritage, and the mission to which we are called by the Christian vocation.” Further, the identity is a “gift to the mission of all Christians and to the service of the whole human family.” Referring to *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* (John Paul, 1990), Brother Larry was “complimented that the Holy See sees our theology teaching as central for Catholic identity.” Speaking to what Catholic identity is not, Brother Quincy added that Catholic identity is not “a lack of analytical approach to everything in the past history of the Church or that comes out of Rome at present.”

School Mission

For retired Brother Oliver, Catholic identity “means that the basic philosophy behind the institution’s mission statement gives priority to the beliefs and practices of the Catholic faith.” The Catholic identity of an institution “lies at the core of its mission and finds expression in the dynamic quality of its culture,” according to Brother Steve. As stated by Brother Kyle, the “mission of the university would have recognizable gospel values within them.” For Brother Larry, identity in “Catholic intellectual life is much more a matter of culture and heritage than of the particular institutional or juridical forms.” Brother Norman’s perspective was that “the mission of the institution, of any institution, defines the scope of its identity.”

Gospel Values

A Christian Brother for 57 years, Brother Ian stated that gospel values are “the guiding principles” of a Catholic institution. “The Gospel message to be of service to the human family” described Catholic identity for Brother Henry. If an institution practices justice “by institutionalizing social labor practices and Christian principles in all its relations with students, faculty, staff, and the community at large,” the school would be Catholic in Brother Quincy’s view. Furthermore, he stated that the philosophy of the institution should reflect sound Christian and Catholic principles of charity, justice, and faith. Brother Steve viewed Catholic identity in higher education as drawing on “social practices responsive to the Gospel.”

Sacraments

Brother David noted that Catholic identity in higher education “begins and ends with the liturgy, especially the mass, and is sustained by it.” Brothers Carl, Ian, Kyle,

Quincy, and Raymond noted the Mass and the availability of the sacraments as being necessary for an institution to be Catholic.

Religious Presence

Brother Francis indicated that Catholic identity means that within the community there is the recognition of the institution “being founded and/or operated by an entity that is Catholic.” As an administrator, Brother Norman has lived out his vocation as a Brother through the mission of the Brothers and this was his attraction to higher education. By being present at the institution, the “example of the Brothers” led him to his vocation. Simply, for Brother Paul, who has been a Brother for 62 years and in higher education for 52 years, the Christian Brothers community embodied the Catholic identity of the institution. Brother Raymond believed that the Catholic identity has meaning in the presence of “some Catholic priests and/or religious working and teaching in the school.” From Brother Kyle’s perspective, there was never a question of the Catholic identity of the institution when the “presence of nuns, priests, and brothers” flourished. However, when these numbers declined, the question began to appear.

Academics

The academics of the institution were a common characteristic described by the Brothers in regard to what Catholic identity meant to them. Within the academics, common themes included the necessity of a Theology and/or Religious Studies department within the institution, the curriculum and/or courses offered to the students, and the composition and hiring practices for faculty and staff members.

Theology/Religious Studies Department

For Brother Carl, the “presence of an academically respectable and responsible department of theology/religious studies is key to the identity of a college as Catholic.” A strong theology program, one that “clearly delineates the precepts of the Catholic Intellectual Tradition accurately and scholarly and thoughtfully and delicately presents current magisterial principals of the Church,” is necessary according to Brother Mason.

Curriculum/Courses

Brother Adam stated that Catholic values “must be incorporated within the curriculum” and this view was shared with Brother Steve, who added that Catholic identity draws on the “spiritual and intellectual legacy of Catholic teaching.” As an institution of higher education, students are encouraged to think, but there also is a “delicate balance” in the discussion so that the students are “taught the reasoning behind Catholic teachings,” according to Brother Adam. Brother David believed that opportunities to put disciplines in dialogue with each other and to explore the relationship between “faith and reason, faith and science” define Catholic identity. For Brother Earl, Catholic identity in higher education meant “that all things are imbued with the Catholic intellectual traditions.” Further, he stated, “the curriculum and courses should be of the great thinkers and writers of the Church.” Brothers Ian, Julian, and Raymond advocated courses that promote the Catholic tradition and heritage, together with scholarship in Catholicism. “A solid theology or religious studies department in which there are some course offerings that refer to the teachings of the Catholic Church” is necessary at a Catholic institution according to Brother Quincy. For Brother Quincy, the “ignorance or disregard of Second Vatican Council documents” does not promote Catholic identity in

higher education. Additionally, he felt that “forcing students to take certain courses like those dealing with scholastic theology, with forcing being the key word, not the offering of the course,” also does not promote Catholic identity.

Faculty and Staff Hire/Composition

Brother Brian felt that it would be “wrong to hire faculty who publicly speak against the Catholic ethos and identity.” Advocating for diversity among faculty, he reported that faculty who are of other faiths, or even no faith, who do not promote views contrary to the Catholic faith and identity are welcome at a Catholic institution. Similarly, Brother Earl believed that all must be welcome, including faculty and staff, as long as they are “always respectful of the Catholic traditions.” A retired administrator, Brother Henry was the only participant of the opinion that the president and provost of a Catholic college must be Catholic. On the other hand, he did not advocate having all faculty and staff members be Catholic. Rather, he supported “great teachers and staff members who want to be of service to the students.” He stated that a significant number of faculty members must be Catholic and the institution must recruit committed Catholics. Brother Mason stressed the importance of hiring a faculty “who are a majority Catholic, who are clearly scholarly and supportive of the Catholic Intellectual Tradition and are personally committed to its promulgation, again with thoughtful discretion.” Brother Norman believed that a Catholic institution should “accept all students and faculty, regardless of religious tradition, because the institution is Catholic.” Brother Timothy felt that “Catholic identity derives from an atmosphere of teachers who look to a higher purpose behind the acquiring of knowledge than just the knowledge or practical use of the subject taught.” Brother Larry stated the need for the institution to continually work to have a

core faculty, administrators and board members who are student oriented, open to the Catholic mission of the university, and invested in dialogue with the heritage and culture it represents. He called this “supporting the committed, mentoring the searching, and recruiting the called.”

Campus Life

The final characteristic of Catholic identity in higher education as described by the Brothers may be encompassed in the campus life of the institution. For some participants, the Catholic identity was evident in the admissions and student body composition; for others, it was in the offerings and services of the campus ministry center and/or the extra-curricular events and activities; and finally, some described the Catholic identity in terms of the religious symbols found on the campus.

Student Admissions

Brother Earl was a proponent of welcoming all, including students, but he felt they needed to always be respectful of the Catholic tradition. For Brother Kyle, when admitting students, a Catholic institution should welcome students of faith or non-faith, as well as provide financial aid packages that would make it possible for those with less means to attend. He further stated that, as part of the Catholic identity, “at least 50% of the student body” would receive some type of financial aid. Catholic means “everybody come,” and as such, according to Brother Oliver, the “admissions policies of a Catholic university should not discriminate on the basis of religious belief.”

Campus Ministry

In addition to a strong theology/religious studies department, another key component for Brother Carl in regard to the Catholic identity of an institution is the

presence of an “active” campus ministry that sponsors outreach programs and retreats. A campus ministry should provide the students with an “opportunity to practice their Catholic faith” and should be staffed with an active Catholic chaplain and/or campus minister, according to Brother Quincy. However, using “numerous pious, old-fashioned prayers and practices” was not Catholic identity in higher education according to him.

Extra-Curricular Activities

As a non-retired staff member, Brother Brian believed that it is the right of a Catholic university to “not invite certain speakers who may speak against a Catholic ethos.” Brother Mason shared this view and added that extra-curricular activities should be conducted in view of the moral principles that have traditionally informed Catholic institutions. Further, Brother Mason described an institution that encouraged discussions and debate among students on critical Catholic issues as being Catholic, provided these discussions are “conducted with wise sensitivity and when occasions and issues merit such discussion, attendance should be voluntary.” Brother Francis indicated that a Catholic university must offer services to the Catholic population that may not be available in secular universities, including Catholic speaker series, service opportunities, and workshops that support the Catholic identity. Brother Ian expanded on the service opportunities to those that “promote the Gospel values.”

Religious Symbols

Throughout the institution, Brother Ian stated there should be symbols reflecting the Catholic heritage. For Brother Julian, the Catholic identity could be found in the architecture of the campus. “Signs and symbols of being Catholic,” according to Brother Mason, “are artistically and discreetly displayed and signs and symbols that could be

construed as detracting from the Catholic identity should not appear.” Brother Raymond, a Christian Brother for 56 years, claimed that a Catholic institution should have exterior signs of a Catholic school (such as, crosses and crucifixes), a chapel or church, Catholic statues, and some buildings carrying Catholic names. Furthermore, he asserted that the name of the institution should be a Catholic name. For Brother Quincy, Catholic identity is not found in the “exaggerated use of holy pictures.”

Research Question 2

The second research question sought to capture the Brothers’ personal experiences of Catholic identity in higher education from an historical perspective. The participants were asked to describe their experiences of Catholic identity when they were first assigned to an institution of higher education and whether their experiences met their expectations. The three major experiences – the on-campus presence of the Christian Brothers, the Catholic institutional ethos, and the Catholic dimension integrated into curriculum – and the common themes that emerged from the responses are listed in Table 4. All 20 of the participants responded to the interview questions and their responses were reported from the perspective of the voices of the Brothers.

Table 4

Experiences and Themes Emerging From Findings Relating to Research Question 2

Experiences	Themes
Presence of Christian Brothers	Animators of Catholic identity Relationship with students
Catholic institutional ethos	Roman Catholic Church Institutional mission Faculty and administrators
Catholic integration within the institution	Curriculum Campus ministry and sacraments Visible signs

Presence of Christian Brothers

Several Brother participants used the word “comfortable” when describing the Catholic identity at the first institution of higher education that they were assigned. It was expected that the Christian Brothers, due to their numbers and on-campus presence, would be the animators of the Catholic identity of the institution. Together with their presence, the relationships with faculty and staff, as well as with the students, described the Catholic identity for some Brothers at their first assignment.

Animators of Catholic Identity

When he recalled his first assignment at an institution of higher education, Brother Earl found it to be a “good one” since there were “a large number of Brothers which assured the Catholicity of the institution.” Brother Brian was first assigned to an institution that had a “large” number of Christian Brothers, who were the animators of the institution’s Catholic identity. He stated, “I think for years, the Catholic identity and its promotion depended on the Brothers and their presence.” Brother Henry indicated that while the Brothers on campus were respected, because their numbers were small in comparison to the general faculty population, “we were frequently holding up Catholic values and principles to an unreceptive audience.” He also shared that, as a Christian Brother, he was “hired specifically to bring a sense of Catholic and Lasallian values” to the education school of the college because, for most, “teaching at [the college] was purely a job – not a mission, not a vocation.”

Brother Paul shared that when he first arrived in January 1960, he was “so involved in preparing classes that I had little time for identity” but living with about 30 Brothers helped shape his perception of the Catholic identity of the institution. Indicating

that his initial experiences were “inextricably” linked with his status as a Christian

Brother, Brother Steve shared,

Cordiality and a genuine spirit of community distinguished my unit colleagues all the time, but I think my initial reception had a special warmth and welcome connected clearly to their happiness at having a Brother once again in the unit. That experience of welcome, of belonging, of being respected and needed, helped me adapt quickly to a new ministry of faith, community-building, and academic service.

Arriving at his first institution shortly after the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council, Brother Larry, because he was a Christian Brother, was able to build on the goodwill and the expectation that “the Brothers’ understanding of Catholic identity was reliable in the changing society, polarized over race, religion, global ethical issues, etc.”

The status of being a De La Salle Christian Brother underscored the experiences of Brother Raymond. He stated,

When I first arrived at [college] in 1978, most of the Christian Brothers had stopped wearing the religious Robe. I decided to wear mine at most school events. At the first faculty meeting that year, I wore my Robe and several people congratulated me for that. Thirty some years later, I still wear my Robe and still get compliments. Now I even wear my Robe off-campus on some occasions.

Within the past eight years, Brother Timothy indicated that there has been a real effort to bring the institution’s Catholic identity to the fore and that the Brothers “should be more of a ‘Catholic’ presence on campus.”

Relationship with Students

The status of being a Brother allowed for students to feel “comfortable” discussing religious issues in “down time” according to Brother Francis. He went on to state that students felt “comfortable voicing their opinions in an atmosphere that they felt was less judgmental” than the more conservative and evangelical denominations from which they were a part. Brother Norman revealed that his personal experience

“encompassed very concrete relationships with the students and faculty,” which he considered “the heart of a Catholic identity.” Brother George shared with the researcher his interaction with a student and the relevance of the liturgy in his life:

I had this situation where a student came to ask me how relevant Mass was to his spiritual well being. He told me because he did not quite understand the centrality of Mass in his life; he was not regular at attending Masses. After we spoke and I clarified certain things in his life and in his faith journey, this student now attends Mass every Sunday and has become [a] vibrant member of the campus ministry.

When teaching his students, Brother David “felt comfortable expressing his teaching of philosophy in faith-filled terms” and in “identifying his debt to important voices in the Catholic intellectual tradition.” Brother George perceived the “underlying values and ethos of the Catholic Church at play in the school environment” and the “relationships that were permeated through these values and ethos among the students” were clearly evident when he arrived. Arriving at an institution where Catholics were a minority of the student population, Brother Timothy found a “Catholic identity that was not pushed” and “you could tell that the students knew that the Brothers and faculty were caring.” For him, his experience of Catholic identity was reflected in his keeping the student at the forefront his teaching:

The thing that strikes me the most about my institution, not just when I arrived but continually, is the real interest most of the teachers (including me) take in really trying to bring out the best in students, especially those who seem to have great difficulties in their studies or lives. The emphasis on showing students the gifts God has given them and how they can develop these gifts for themselves and for others is really a hallmark of our campus. There is no one story, but being a math professor working with an individual student, it has been extremely rewarding to help a student overcome a fear of math and start to realize the potential they have in the God-given ability to think logically.

Catholic Institutional Ethos

As a Catholic institution of higher education, the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, as well as the reforms of the Second Vatican Council, factored into the experience of Catholic identity for several Brothers. These teachings, together with institution's mission and the faculty and administration present in the school, shaped the experience of the Brothers.

Roman Catholic Church

When Brother Larry was assigned to his first institution in 1963, he was asked to move from the field of biology to theology while the Second Vatican Council was in "motion." For the Brothers, he stated, "Catholic identity meant for us as lay educators to prepare ourselves to serve the Church by having competent teachers and scholars to implement the Council in our education, administration, and formation programs." He further articulated that it was a challenge for the Brothers, who were founded for primary education and gradually moved into secondary and then tertiary education, "to be supported in the ministry of professor and scholar, in service to the Church." The implementation of the Second Vatican Council, according to Brother Larry, was not smooth since the Brothers "in general did not have the theological background to internalize the Catholic identity formed in the Council." For Brother Norman,

The very fact that many religious traditions were present in the institution, and that the students made it a point of pride to get along with and respect each other, opened my eyes to the understanding that our Catholicism embraces all who come to our institutions.

Brother Mason stated that the Church was still trying to find itself after the Second Vatican Council and that the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools suffered from many defections among the Brothers, yet his institution still claimed a

strong Catholic identity as evidenced by those who remained. Brother Francis articulated that his “bias is that I think that the whole Catholic identity controversy is the result of Church authority’s discomfort with the changing dynamic among Catholics.” He felt that the structures and mentalities that served the Church well in the beginning of the 20th century were “no longer relevant.” Specifically, he stated, “Catholicism has become more upscale and politically significant in this century and the Church has not adjusted well.” Brother Kyle “never doubted” the Catholic identity of his first institution and “neither did the bishop, faculty, the public, or anyone else.”

Institutional Mission

From his personal experience, Brother Kyle stated, “Being Catholic is something we are and something we’re becoming, not just something we do once a week or some specific number of times.” Among his academic colleagues when he first arrived, Brother Steve was pleased to find a “genuine spirit of ownership with respect to the institution’s mission and aims.” However, he was disappointed that this sense of ownership from his colleagues did not “manifest itself across other campus constituencies.” He discovered that too often “key features of the Catholic character of the culture on campus were under-valued and/or under-funded.” From his Board-level experience, Brother Adam indicated that the Catholicity of the institution was rarely discussed at the Board level but found that the institution’s mission statement did reflect its Catholicity. For Brother Carl, he spoke of a warm and collegial community at his first institution and contrasted it when he arrived at his second institution. He stated,

By way of contrast, I remember my reception here at this place with bitterness. The Brothers were very supportive, but I found, and still find, that there is a palpable anti-Brother and anti-Catholic undercurrent at this institution. I had to come to California to have the worst experience in a classroom in my entire

professional life and encountered “colleagues” who barely concealed their ill-will towards me just because, I am convinced, I am a Brother. I know several other Brothers here—fully professionally and academically qualified – have dishearteningly similar stories to recount. There is not today a single Catholic in the academic administration of [this] college, a situation that must be corrected if the place is really legitimately to call itself Catholic.

Brother Henry was surprised that when he arrived at his first institution that there was “almost no talk about things Catholic or Lasallian”; rather, there was an emphasis on the Liberal Arts tradition of the institution. He found the school’s mission statement to be outdated and the only visible sign that the institution was Catholic was the chapel.

Brother Ian identified his school’s mission statement as “defining the vision of a Catholic college.”

Faculty and Administrators

After serving many years in secondary education institutions, Brother Steve learned, much to his satisfaction, that the Lasallian principles and practices that had served as his guide during his long tenure as a high school teacher, were “not only supported by colleagues, but also clearly encouraged in faculty documents.” Brother Carl stated that there was not time to worry about Catholic identity when he arrived because “faculty and staff were Catholic and wanted to work in a Catholic college.” For Brother Norman, he described how Brothers who previously arrived at his first institution were “not so easily welcomed to the academic community” as there existed a tension between the “search for high academic competency and the need/desire for more Brothers.” He further shared that he felt the effort to become an institution with high academic standards paralleled the movements across the country in Catholic higher education during the latter half of the last century. Brother Brian shared his experience of Catholic identity when he first arrived on campus:

After the first few weeks on campus I was informed that the Lasallian Educator of the Year for the university was a lesbian and also an atheist. I was also told that one of my colleagues in the biology department in which I am teaching was also an atheist. I really wondered what I was getting myself into! But after nine months I find the Lasallian Educator one of the most dynamic, energetic, well-loved teachers in charge of the Honors Program and who has a real love and appreciation for her students and the Brothers. And the students love and respect her in return. I also find that the atheist in the biology department in which I teach is probably the best teacher in the department. She is tough but fair and the students who take her class are well-prepared for the future. She also is very supportive of me and would like me to teach full-time in the department. These two examples challenge my preconceived view of who makes a "good" faculty member in a "Catholic" institution and what is meant by a university's Catholic identity.

Brother Oliver was surprised to find professed atheists among the faculty as he had expected that the faculty “would have a high percentage of Catholics employed there.” Additionally, there were no attempts to educate the faculty on what it meant to be a Lasallian or Catholic institution. His first experience of teaching at a Catholic university was that it “was sometimes hard to find those behaviors and practices that a person walking on the campus for the first time would recognize as a Catholic university.” He also stated that the “general behavior of the university was an apology for that instead of a proud profession of it.” Brother Ian found that while the faculty, religious or lay, were the animators of the Catholic tradition, he discovered few faculty members with a knowledge or commitment to this tradition. Brother David encountered some administrators who were “bewildered, apathetic, and sometimes even hostile to the Catholic intellectual tradition.” While not advocating the hiring of Catholic-only faculty, Brother Earl felt it was important to educate those of other faiths in what it means to work in a Catholic environment in order to become strong advocates to the Catholic identity of the institution.

Catholic Integration Within the Institution

Some participants described an experience of Catholic identity at their institution through the curriculum offered to the students. Outward signs of the institution being Catholic, for example the prominence of the chapel, together with the requirement of Theology courses, and an active, engaged campus ministry that provided an opportunity for students to receive the sacraments, shaped the experience of Catholic identity for several Brothers.

Curriculum

At their first assignments, Brother Steve was pleased to find “new courses/programs that focused on Catholic studies” and Brother Quincy found that the institution “met all my expectations of a Catholic school.” Brother Quincy stated that it was “very obvious that the student body was Catholic and practicing,” as well as there being “requirements of theology and philosophy with many choices and some with a number of ‘direct Catholic’ thrust, e.g. dogma.” It was important to Brother Kyle during his initial assignment that the students take the required theology courses and find them interesting, yet not be pressured to be “anything but a better member of their own religious organization.” For Brother Raymond, the ability to teach in a classroom setting and “begin each class with a prayer” showed that Catholic identity was as he expected. In the example provided by Brother Julian, his experience of Catholic identity happened when he was in the classroom:

When the veterans from Korea arrived in the early '50s, Father Joseph Servante, O.P. and I taught the Senior Class theology. There were two sections c. 25 each and at the semester we simply switched sections. At that time, my course was on “The Theological Virtues” and I accompanied the text of St. Thomas with a few modern poets, such as Robinson Jeffers, who in their poetry had intimations of what Thomas was saying. One day as we were discussing Charity, along with a

modern poem, one of the students literally jumped out his seat and shouted, "I got it!" It was one of those great Catholic teaching moments.

At his first institution, Brother Ian identified that having required Catholic studies courses in Theology and Philosophy strengthened the Catholic identity of the school. The main reality that Brother Raymond encountered was that even though Catholics were in numerical minority, the school "was still a Roman Catholic school."

Campus Ministry and Sacraments

An active campus ministry was apparent at Brother Quincy's first assignment, providing "plenty of opportunities for practicing one's faith, prayers, etc." Asked to be one of the Campus Ministers at his first institution and hearing that the President wanted to "enhance the Catholic identity of the university," Brother Brian reported that he had "Catholic identity placed on my plate – especially when it came to 'Catholic' events on campus, e.g., Mass, certain prayer services, activities around Lent and Advent, etc."

Brother Ian found that there was minimal participation in prayer services or discussions regarding spirituality at his first institution, nor was there a passion for the Catholic or any other religious tradition among the campus community. Brothers David and Quincy both were pleased that daily Eucharist was offered to promote the Catholic identity of the institution, with Brother Quincy commenting, "Daily Mass was always packed." Brother Henry experienced the presence of a campus ministry on campus, but it was viewed more as a club in contrast to a "vital, dynamic force" on campus.

Visible Signs

Brother Henry found limited discussion of Lasallian values at his first institution, with little of Catholic principles. The Catholic identity rested on the fact that the logo of the College contained a drawing of the chapel. Furthermore, he indicated there were no

artistic representations of the Founder anywhere on campus. Brother David shared a story:

There is one way where the Catholic identity was in need of a little polishing. There were no crucifixes in the classrooms of my semester teaching assignments. So I went to the Dean responsible for classroom assignments and asked her who was in charge of such things. She laughed and said it would have to be me. So I went to the nearest religious goods store and bought crucifixes for my classrooms. The problem, in general, has since been rectified by [the college] but the crucifix I put up in the larger classroom I was assigned to is still prominently displayed.

Research Question 3

The third research question sought to capture the Brothers' personal experiences of Catholic identity in higher education from a current day perspective. The participants were asked to describe their current experiences of Catholic identity, whether their experiences of Catholic identity had changed since they began their service in higher education, and the greatest contributions being made to strengthen the Catholic identity in higher education. The three major experiences – the Roman Catholic Church, the Catholicity of the institution, and the campus programs offered at the institution – and the common themes that emerged from the responses are listed in Table 5. All 20 of the participants responded to the interview questions and their responses were reported from the perspective of the voices of the Brothers.

Roman Catholic Church

For many Brothers, their experience of Catholic identity today is linked with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and the outcomes from the Second Vatican Council. At the institutions that they were assigned during this study, the mere fact that they were Christian Brothers identifies the institution as Catholic. The Brothers described this as their experience of Catholic identity within a Catholic and Lasallian framework.

Table 5

Experiences and Themes Emerging From Findings Relating to Research Question 3

Experiences	Themes
Roman Catholic Church	Church doctrine Role of the Christian Brothers Lasallian character
Catholicity of the institution	Administration/faculty/staff hiring Mission and institution identity
Campus programs	Faculty/staff formation Campus ministry Extracurricular activities

Church Doctrine

Brother Carl stated that the question of Catholic identity in higher education was “highly conflicted” due to the fact that right-wing conservatives and progressives can agree on little, if anything. Additionally, he observed that the Church leadership is “astonishingly incompetent, totally irrelevant, or incapable of transcending the cronyism that seems to be its most salient characteristic.” However, throughout all this change, Brother Carl remained hopeful that the institution would have a “clearer sense of what the Catholic tradition really means: learning, love, and liberation.” Brother Kyle shared a personal experience:

About nine years ago we were having an open house on the campus.... Two mothers from New Orleans were there and asked if they could see me to ask some questions about the Theology Department. I was chair of the department at the time. After a few answers that did not seem to satisfy their questions, one mom finally said: “Brother, let’s get specific. Do you follow every precept and dictate of the Pope or not?” I got all excited and said: “You know, we just had a meeting of the department last week and we had a discussion of the Bishop’s document, *To Teach as Jesus Did*. We are committed to following the teaching directives of Jesus.” One woman found herself muttering out loud in a disappointed, almost disgusted groan, “Oh, Him.” I believe that in the past the culture of Catholic identity forgot about Jesus. This isn’t surprising since we weren’t really encouraged to get into the gospels much on our own until Vatican II. We were more devotional than intentionally followers of Jesus Christ.

Brother Ian stated that since the Second Vatican Council was just beginning to be understood when he first arrived at an institution of higher education, the intellectual challenges and discussions were few since it was not yet a time of transition in Church teachings. Brother Brian personally disagreed with the direction of the Church in regard to its seeking a return to the days of pre-Second Vatican Council, essentially creating an institution that is less Catholic. Agreeing with this statement, Brother David described the greatest contribution today was the budding attempt to redefine Catholic identity in a post-Vatican II world in which Catholics fully embraced the vision of the Council for the Church's sympathetic engagement with the world.

Role of the Christian Brothers

According to Brother Raymond, Catholic identity in higher education is eroding. He stated that Catholic identity is not gone per se, but rather it was just undergoing a process of secularization and he planned to remain at his institution to "do what I can to uphold the Catholic identity for as long as I can." Due to the reduction in the numbers of Christian Brothers who were active in teaching and administration and therefore having a less "visible presence," Brother Brian indicated that there was a perception of a loss of the Catholic identity at his institution. He further stated that for some people in the past, the Catholic identity of the institution had been associated with the Christian Brothers. For Brother Kyle, the way to identify himself as being a Catholic was by his shifting his attention from the athletic, fraternity or sorority students, to the students who blended into the woodwork. Describing the Brother's work in a South American country where the Brothers were working with the poor, not only in farming techniques but also in humanities, Brother Carl reported,

This, to me, is the best of the Catholic tradition. It is alive and well in lots of places throughout the world and I am very proud to say I am a Brother who belongs to a worldwide order that really does work for human growth (intellectually and spiritually) and liberation.

Previously, Brother Ian stated that there was less tension about the Catholic identity at his institution. Additionally, he stated that in the past with a large number of religious present at the institution, most of whom were easily identifiable due to their attire, there were numerous reminders of Catholic identity, which were not currently apparent. Another change noted by Brother Kyle was the absence of wearing religious garb by a majority of the Christian Brothers and the chaplain at his institution. However, Brother Raymond stated that the greatest contribution to the Catholic identity was the presence of a religious community on campus. This community of Christian Brothers at the institution “lived here, worked here, taught here, and was a Catholic presence.” He believed that the Christian Brothers insured that Catholic ideas were taught, that they provided a good example, and that they promoted that Catholic sacraments were available at the institution. Brother Mason believed that it was the responsibility of the Christian Brothers to bolster the Catholic mission of the institution with a plan to make the mission statement come to life through programs that enhanced the Catholic intellectual tradition. Failure to do so, he stated, would cause the institution “to flounder on the shores of secularization.”

Lasallian Character

For Brother Brian, speaking about the institution being Lasallian, which he translated to mean “faith, community, and service,” the understanding of Catholic identity is not as common and even less understood. Brother Timothy indicated that with the arrival of a new lay president, the emphasis on Catholic and Lasallian had come to the

forefront in awareness, but he reported that there was still work to be done in having this reverberate throughout the faculty. Brother Steve stated,

In my perspective, the Catholic identity of the institution is no longer something bequeathed through tradition or articulated through carefully crafted words. It is the dynamic response to the mission and aims that breathes life into what we say we are as a Catholic institution in the Lasallian tradition.

As he contrasted his institution from when he first arrived with today, Brother Timothy stated excellence in academics was previously paramount, but today there is a realization that the institution is actually Lasallian and Catholic, in that order.

Catholicity of the Institution

The experience of Catholic identity for some participants was described through the composition of the faculty, staff, and administration in regard to their religious affiliation. Additionally, for some Brothers, the renewed efforts of linking the institution's mission with the Catholic traditions of the school explained their experience of Catholic identity.

Administration/Faculty/Staff Hiring

Brother Carl found that many faculty members in Catholic institutions were either not Catholic or more or less hostile to religion in general, and Catholicism in particular. He genuinely advocated a proactive movement to add more Catholics to the faculty and staff because he felt it would make a positive change in the atmosphere at his institution. For Brother Earl, he stated that the “gate-keeper had left his post,” allowing for new faculty and staff to become part of the institution who did not have any concept of Catholic higher education. Specifically, Brother Earl indicated that the upper-management of the institution were all of other religious denominations, stating that “several have little regard of, or give thought to, Catholic when making decisions for the

departments they are in.” He continued that the hiring of non-Catholics created a different tone at the institution, including his belief that the Catholic identity was much weaker and “strong steps should be taken to correct this hiring, training, etc.” Brother Henry spoke of an under-current of anti-Catholic sentiment when it came to the hiring of faculty and staff. At Brother Oliver’s institution, his President did not compromise when it came to professing the Catholic nature of the institution, sharing with the researcher that some of the talks the President gave and the articles he wrote, “were better than most of the homilies I hear at Sunday Mass.” The “intentionality” of not backing away from the institution’s Catholicity nor its academic freedom ensured the Catholic identity according to Brother Kyle.

Mission and Institution Identity

The most significant change that Brother Norman experienced was the intentionality that promoted the Catholic identity by open dialogue with faculty and staff about the expectations and opportunities to live the institution’s mission. However, Brother Mason felt that his institution seemingly decided to make itself more attractive to potential students by diminishing its Catholic tradition and becoming more secularized. Brother Steve’s experience of Catholic identity was inextricably tied to how he and his colleagues (administrators, faculty, staff) went about valuing and responding to the institution’s mission and aims. He stated, “It is through daily valuing and responding to the institution’s mission and aims that we build a Catholic culture that is both accountable and dynamic.” Overall, Brother George shared that his institution was becoming more secular. While not subscribing to orthodoxy, he felt that the institution needed to be faithful of the charisms that served the institution and the Catholic identity over the years.

Brother Norman concluded that Catholic identity today was a result of a very conscious effort on the part of institutions to understand and renew their various missions.

Describing his institution as one that had a good reputation in the local community, Brother Francis described that the Catholicity of the institution was not a significant part of that reputation. He equated the reputation with being a private institution with some type of religious formation associated with it as well. Brother Ian stressed that a beautifully written mission statement that reaffirmed the Catholic identity and tradition, as well as a commitment to concretize this identity, was essential for a Catholic institution of higher education. Since his arrival in higher education, Brother David has observed a decrease in the desire for dialogue, noting that there are camps separated by a lack of interest in any dialogue. Brother Steve stated,

What all the narratives contain is a general sentiment that lives have been forever changed for the better through the witness and principled practice of teachers. For one particular student, this change was so powerful that he embraced a pedagogical perspective ... that placed him, for the first time in his life, in direct opposition to ways of being and doing that were unquestioned values in his own family.

A positive change since his arrival at an institution of higher education for Brother Kyle was that, through formation programs, more members of the institution were able to articulate the Catholic identity, perhaps by not even using those words. Today, he firmly believes that his institution is mission driven. Additionally, Brother Kyle perceived that many more faculty and staff, including the Brothers, knew more about the Founder than they ever had in the past. In contrast, Brother Carl viewed some of these steps as nothing more than “window dressing.” While he agreed with the intent, he stated that he doubted the institution as a whole was really behind these formation programs.

Campus Programs

In order to develop and enhance the Catholic identity of the institution to which the Brothers were currently assigned, they detailed the need to create formation programs in the Catholic and Lasallian traditions for the faculty and staff. These programs, together with the activities and services of the institution's campus ministry and the extracurricular speakers, seminars, and events, described the Catholic identity experience for the participants.

Faculty/Staff Formation

The formation programs and opportunities for faculty and staff in order to engage the Catholic and Lasallian tradition were the most important steps being taken to strengthen the Catholic identity of the institution, according to Brother Norman. Brother Brian stated that at his current institution, there was a lot of work to be done to foster and promote the Catholic identity, adding that there was a "hunger among some on the staff who are Catholic for a greater overt Catholic identity." Brother Ian spoke of the essential need for a minority core of faculty and staff who would work to keep the Catholic identity as a top priority as the institution planned for the future. As expressed in his view of the majority of the faculty and staff at his institution, Brother David felt that Catholic identity was "foreign," something that was only a topic of interest of the administrators and a few colleagues. Brother Henry insisted that one of the greatest needs in Catholic higher education was a "visible, articulate group of faculty and staff" who possess an understanding of Catholic identity. Additionally, he stated that as sponsorship by religious orders has incorporated participation by lay partners, institutions has become

more intentional in articulating and sponsoring their missions for a new generation of faculty, staff, and administration. He stated,

When there is a formal and ongoing formation program for Catholic and Lasallian identity on campuses, Catholic identity has a chance of being coherent, comprehensive, and real.

As a professor, Brother Steve asserted that his experience of Catholic identity involved a constant effort to practice better what he and his colleagues profess about themselves as educators and the institution they serve. He elaborated,

The experience of Catholic identity is the cyclical experience of reflection, dialogue, response, and assessment in a shared effort to build a community that embraces and nurtures all its stakeholders.

At Brother Brian's institution, support has been provided to a group of faculty who meet at least twice a semester to discuss the Catholic identity of the institution and how it may be fostered.

Campus Ministry

Having a vibrant campus ministry program, which provides the sacraments, prayer services, and retreats and helps Catholic students to practice their faith, is necessary for a Catholic institution of higher education, according to Brothers Oliver, Quincy, and George. When Brother Timothy first arrived on campus, there was a campus ministry that was recognized and appreciated but did not permeate the atmosphere of the institution's community. An important way to bolster the Catholic identity at Brother Brian's institution was the President's decision to increase the staff in the Office of Campus Ministry that would allow one person to focus solely on the Catholicity of the institution.

Extracurricular Activities

Brother Earl expressed that the institution to which he is assigned is still alive and well, but “with less enthusiasm and authority to guide decisions dealing with speakers on campus and lectures” related to with Catholic identity. Likewise, Brother Henry advocated for a “consistent program of speakers, concerts, and art shows that highlight Catholic social/theological traditions” on the college campus. Furthermore, he felt that student life programs needed to have “Gospel values clearly present in their policies, procedures, and practices.” In regard to speakers, seminars, panels, and articles, Brother Ian called for a renewed commitment to the Catholic intellectual tradition. Brother George believed that the Catholic identity still existed to some extent at his institution, but he stressed the need to “watch out as some of our Catholic ethics and values, in a bid to accommodate other faiths and cultures, are getting diluted and watered down.” Brother Paul concurred when he stated,

The greatest contribution being made to strengthen the Catholic identity in higher education is our ability to be Catholic while promoting interfaith and social justice dialogue.

On the contrary, Brothers Mason and George were in disbelief that a gay club was permitted at their institutions. This public acknowledgement as a club at a Catholic institution for them was inconsistent with the Church’s doctrinal identity.

Research Question 4

The fourth research question sought to capture the Brothers’ vision of Catholic identity in higher education. The participants were asked to envision what Catholic identity in higher education will look like in 5 years, in 10 years, and in 20 years, as well as what they perceived to be the greatest challenge facing higher education in regard to

the Catholic identity. The two major characteristics – the institutional mission and the institutional demographics – and the common themes that emerged from the responses are listed in Table 6. Not all the Brother participants responded to the interview questions. Four of the initial 20 Brothers did not provide an answer to what they would envision what Catholic identity would be in 20 years. Additionally, only 18 of the 20 participants provided a response to what they perceived to be the greatest challenge facing higher education in regard to Catholic identity. All responses to the interview questions were reported from the perspective of the voices of the Brothers.

Table 6

Characteristics and Themes Emerging From Findings Relating to Research Question 4

Characteristic	Themes
Institutional mission	Lay leadership Alignment with Roman Catholic Church Secularization of institution
Institutional demographics	Formation programs Hiring for mission Student body

Institutional Mission

The first characteristic of the Brothers' vision of Catholic identity in higher education focused on the institution's mission. For 12 of the participants, the future of Catholic identity was the responsibility of the emerging lay leadership, as well as how this vision was in harmony with the direction of the Roman Catholic Church. While several Brothers spoke of the inevitable secularization of the institution with the diminishing role of the Christian Brothers and other religious, other Brothers spoke of a future of vibrancy and spiritual renewal. As Brother Carl shared,

Holy Mother Church is in such a sad state of disarray and our society so polarized that I suppose in one sense it's a sign of hope that the Catholic identity issue is still on the horizon.

Lay Leadership

For Brothers Ian and Raymond, it was inevitable that there will be more lay leadership at all levels, including the President, and the laity will assume greater leadership in the articulation of the Catholic identity and its implementation. However, even with lay leadership, Brother Timothy pointed to his current President, who has been very proactive in keeping the institution's Catholicity in the forefront. He explained, "If this attitude is true in other Catholic institutions, then the future looks good." According to Brother Paul, in the future, institutions will depend more and more on the action of the lay leaders and the theology departments in the area of Catholicity. He shared that the administrations will be less reactive and the conversation on what makes a school Catholic will start to fade. He believed that whatever Catholic "things" had been put in place during the previous years would remain in place due to inertia rather than belief.

Alignment with the Roman Catholic Church

Brother Carl addressed the gulf that exists between the members of the campus community who embrace the tradition versus those who more or less openly dislike the tradition of the institution. He stated,

I have a feeling that the mainstream will just muddle along trying to maintain the best of the tradition without giving into pressure from the right or the left to become more ideologically pure in one direction or another.

Brother Kyle spoke similarly, stating that Catholic identity will look "fractured" in five years, akin to asking, "On what side are you on?", and it will be difficult for one group to befriend the other. According to Brother Brian, the institution's mission will become the

central indicator of the Catholicity of the school as greater attention is made to bring the mission and the Catholic identity into line with each other. He further explained that he would not be surprised that in the future the Church will provide an explicit statement on what makes an institution of higher learning Catholic. He further stated that many of the current Catholic institutions of higher education might not subscribe to the Church's protocol and "may have to go by some other name than a 'Catholic' institution because of their non-acceptance of required criteria for such a designation."

As the years go on, Brother Henry declared that there would be fewer institutions that call themselves Catholic as "the divide in the theological stances within the Church will cause some to not want to be identified as a Catholic institution." He also identified three types of Catholic institutions of higher education for the future, ranging from an ultra-conservative view of the Church to a more moderate view to one that is in the Catholic tradition in name only. Brother Ian envisioned a future in which there is a return to a more traditional focus with some pre-Second Vatican Council ideals and an articulation of these along with the "rediscovery of the devotional aspect of piety."

Secularization of the Institution

Like several Brothers, Brother Adam did not envision much of a change in the next five years as he maintained that while older, there would still be enough Christian Brothers present on the campus to be the "face of Catholic identity." As the Brothers' numbers continue to diminish, he did not believe that there would be the same level of commitment by lay leaders to the Catholic identity as has been evidenced by the Brothers. Brother Timothy indicated that the Catholic identity would erode slightly and

become less Catholic and more secular with the passing of each Christian Brother.

Brother Earl stated that Catholic identity

...now looks and will continue to look worse in the next 10 to 20 years unless strong steps are taken with fearless leaders now, or else most institutions will be Catholic in name only or, worse still, without the name Catholic at all.

Brother Steve believed that more than a few Catholic institutions of higher learning were already struggling to maintain proficient levels of service to their mission, thereby becoming more secular. He predicted that Catholic higher education will reflect an identity embracing both the small “c” and the capital “C” in Catholic, but the small “c” will have a more important position within the institutional culture than it currently enjoys today. Fewer clearly identifiable Catholic campuses will exist in the future, according to Brother David, but they will be stronger in their active and public study of the Catholic tradition. Brother Larry stated that, over time, some institutions will move more self-consciously in an independent manner but with a Catholic heritage. These institutions will become more sectarian, clearly identified as a certain type of “Catholic,” and will maintain some essential, but selective dimension of Catholic identity. Brother Mason succinctly declared that the fate of Catholic identity in higher education depended on the leadership qualities of the committed Catholic administrators who possessed clear Christian principles in mind and execution.

Institutional Demographics

The final characteristic of the Brother’s perception of Catholic identity in institutions of higher education was the active commitment and role of the faculty and staff actively working in the institution. The development and implementation of formation programs, similar to those the Brothers themselves participated in, together

with the importance of hiring for institutional mission, were the themes that were evident in the Brothers' responses. Additionally, several Brothers spoke of what the student attending a Catholic institution of higher education would be like in the future.

Formation Programs

Brother David associated the Catholic identity in the institution within a vibrant campus ministry and social justice programs for the faculty, staff, and students. Brother Larry was most articulate when discussing the importance of the formation programs for all members of the institution. He advocated for a transformation of Lasallian leadership programs from "colleague enrichment into rigorous training for boards, administrators, and select faculty" in Catholic heritage and its current contextual situations. Additionally, he called for more intentional institutional support for Lasallian ministry training programs for administration, faculty, staff, and appropriate students, in developing partnership programs and services with international Catholic and Lasallian institutions. Lastly, Brother Larry demanded that spiritual support for lay leadership that was once provided for Brothers, that is, retreats, workshops, continued Catholic and Lasallian formation and sabbaticals, be implemented and funded.

Hiring for Mission

Brother Earl believed that there will be "a continuing spiral downwards on the perception of the importance or need for a Catholic higher education." Furthermore, he stated that administrators would continue to "ignore" any attempts to improve hiring practices for fear of being considered "too conservative" or perhaps even worried about lawsuits. Brother Earl advocated the hiring of only "Catholics in good standing." For Brother David, in the next five years, the "misunderstandings and negotiations of

important questions of hiring for mission will still be unresolved.” But beyond the five years, he declared that the “legitimacy of hiring professors with expertise in the Catholic tradition will remain identifiably Catholic in spheres beyond the sacramental life of the campus.”

Brother Francis did not think that there would be any significant change in Catholic identity of higher education in the next five years, but that decisions at his institution were currently being made that were “at the very least troubling, and at the very most, morally questionable.” Specifically, he shared that non-Catholic staff members were demoted because it was thought that a Catholic would better suit the position.

In my mind, this is analogous to what another Brother has referred to as “throwing Lasallian stones,” that is, using religious heritage as a weapon. I doubt Jesus, nor LaSalle, had this in mind.

In the future, Brother Steve envisioned an institution that would make a concerted effort to hire and assess performance in terms of mission and would more readily define these processes from an institutional mission perspective.

Tacit support for/of the mission, aims, and Catholic character of the college or university will no longer represent a sufficient response to the needs of the institution and its students.

Student Body

Brother Brian believed that, in the future, the student demographics would continue to be diverse but less Roman Catholic. He further envisioned that the faith life of the student would be more spiritual but not necessarily associated with any particular established religion. Brother Ian described the future as one in which students might be

seeking a more secure and predictable way of living, with a greater tolerance of inclusivity and for those who believe differently. He emphasized,

I think that there will be a greater pride in the Catholic identity which teaches and practices Gospel values...dignity of each person, and emphasis on “come to learn and leave to serve.”

Brother Larry envisioned a Catholic institution with fewer Catholic students, while

Brother Oliver believed that Catholic students would eventually increase to 60% of the student population.

Summary

The Christian Brothers assigned to institutions of higher education in the United States were asked by the researcher to share their experience of Catholic identity from an historical and current-day perspective, as well as to envision what Catholic identity in higher education would be in the future.

The first interview question asked the participants to ascertain how the Brothers characterized Catholic identity in higher education. The main characteristics to emerge from the findings included the Catholic ethos, that is, how the Brothers understood the Roman Catholic Church; the mission of the institution; the presence of religious on the campus; the availability of the sacraments; and, how the institution reflected the values found in the Gospel. Additionally, the Brothers characterized Catholic identity through the institution's academic programs. This was described by the necessity of a Theology and/or Religious Studies department within the institution that offered a curriculum grounded in the Catholic intellectual tradition. The overall composition of the faculty and staff who were versed in the mission of the institution also reflected the Brothers' perception of Catholic identity in higher education. The final characteristic of Catholic

identity in higher education as described by the Brothers was encompassed in the campus life of the institution. For some participants, the Catholic identity was evident in the admissions and student body composition; for others, it was in the offerings and services of the campus ministry center and/or the extra-curricular events and activities; and finally, some described the Catholic identity in terms of the religious symbols found in the campus.

The second research question gathered the Brothers' personal experiences of Catholic identity in higher education from an historical perspective. The participants shared their experiences of Catholic identity when they were first assigned to an institution of higher education and whether their experiences met their expectations. Several Brother participants used the word "comfortable" when describing the Catholic identity at the first institution of higher education that they were assigned. It was expected that the Christian Brothers, due to their numbers and on-campus presence, would be the animators of the Catholic identity of the institution. Together with their presence, the relationships with faculty and staff, as well as with the students, described the Catholic identity for some Brothers at their first assignment. As a Catholic institution of higher education, the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, as well as the reforms of the Second Vatican Council, factored into the experience of Catholic identity for several Brothers. These teachings, together with the institution's Catholic mission and the committed faculty and administration present in the school, shaped the experience of Catholic identity of the Brothers. Some participants described an experience of Catholic identity at their institution through the curriculum offered to the students. Outward signs of the institution being Catholic, for example, the prominence of the chapel, together with

the requirement of Theology courses, and an active, engaged campus ministry that provided an opportunity for students to receive the sacraments, shaped the experience of Catholic identity for several Brothers.

The third research question captured the Brothers' personal experiences of Catholic identity in higher education from a current day perspective. The participants described their current experiences of Catholic identity, whether their experiences of Catholic identity had changed since they began their service in higher education, and the greatest contributions being made to strengthen the Catholic identity in higher education. For many Brothers, their experience of Catholic identity today was linked with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and the outcomes from the Second Vatican Council. At the institutions that they were assigned during this study, the mere fact that they were Christian Brothers identified the institution as Catholic. The Brothers described this as their experience of Catholic identity within a Catholic and Lasallian framework. The experience of Catholic identity for some participants was described through the composition of the faculty, staff, and administration in regard to their religious affiliation. Additionally, for some Brothers, the renewed efforts of linking the institution's mission with the Catholic traditions of the school explained their experience of Catholic identity. In order to develop and enhance the Catholic identity of the institution to which the Brothers were currently assigned, they detailed the need to create formation programs in the Catholic and Lasallian traditions for the faculty and staff. These programs, together with the activities and services of the institution's campus ministry and the extracurricular speakers, seminars, and events, described the Catholic identity experience for the participants.

The fourth research question asked the Brothers to envision what Catholic identity in higher education will look like in 5 years, in 10 years, and in 20 years, as well as what they perceived to be the greatest challenge facing higher education in regard to the Catholic identity. The first characteristic of the Brothers' vision of Catholic identity in higher education focused on the institution's mission. For 12 of the participants, the future of Catholic identity was the responsibility of the emerging lay leadership, as well as how this vision was in harmony with the direction of the Roman Catholic Church. While several Brothers spoke of the inevitable secularization of the institution with the diminishing role of the Christian Brothers and other religious, other Brothers spoke of a future of vibrancy and spiritual renewal. The final characteristic of the Brother's perception of Catholic identity in institutions of higher education was the commitment and role of the faculty and staff actively working in the institution. The development and implementation of formation programs, similar to those the Brothers themselves participated in, together with the importance of hiring for institutional mission, were the themes that were evident in the Brothers' responses. Additionally, several Brothers spoke of what the student attending a Catholic institution of higher education would be like in the future.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of the Study

Catholic identity is considered to be the single most important issue facing Catholic higher education in the United States. Many scholars have suggested that sustaining Catholic identity and preventing secularization depends upon the integration of the Catholic intellectual tradition and the sponsoring religious congregation. The Catholic identity often has been discussed in terms of the decreasing presence of various signs and symbols of Catholicity. Additionally, the number of founding religious groups present on governing boards, the number of Catholics among the student body, the number of required theology courses, the role of the curriculum and the faculty, and the number of liturgical opportunities available for Catholic formation have been employed as measures of Catholic identity.

The purpose of this study was to explore the De La Salle Christian Brothers' personal experiences of Catholic identity in higher education in the United States as the sponsoring congregation of their campuses. Seeking the participation of all the Christian Brothers assigned to institutions of higher education in the United States, the researcher was only able to secure permission from the San Francisco, Midwest, and New Orleans-Sante Fe Districts. These Districts included Saint Mary's College of California, Christian Brothers University, Lewis University, and Saint Mary's University. The leadership representing the District of Eastern North America declined to grant permission to include the Brothers assigned to Manhattan College and La Salle University for this research. From those Districts in which permission was granted, 20 Christian Brothers

participated in the research by answering a series of interview questions pertaining to the research questions over a three-week period in May 2012. With an aging and diminishing population of Christian Brothers present in the colleges and universities that they sponsor, the rich diversity of the experiences of the Christian Brothers regarding Catholic identity were those voices that this research intended to capture. Initially, the researcher explored the Brothers' personal characterizations of Catholic identity. Then, the study examined the Brothers' personal experiences of Catholic identity in higher education from an historical, as well as a current-day perspective. Finally, the researcher invited the Brothers to envision the future of Catholic identity in higher education.

The researcher examined the literature on Catholic identity in higher education through an historical examination of Catholic higher education in the United States, Roman Catholic Church documents, scholarly research on the topic of Catholic identity, and literature that addressed the role of the sponsoring religious congregation. For this qualitative study, the researcher utilized virtual research to conduct the research. The virtual research allowed the researcher to include the experiences of the Brothers assigned to four institutions of higher education in the United States sponsored by the Christian Brothers. In a typical qualitative study, the researcher would have been limited to a random sample of both institutions and subjects due to time, travel, and financial constraints. However, the use of email to conduct the research permitted a greater number of Brothers to participate in the study and have their voices captured. This study incorporated the grounded theory approach to produce a broad-based description of the Brothers' experience of Catholic identity.

To document the voices of the Christian Brothers' regarding their experiences of Catholic identity in higher education in the United States, this study examined the following research questions:

1. How do De La Salle Christian Brothers characterize Catholic identity in higher education?
2. Historically, what have been the De La Salle Christian Brothers' personal experiences of Catholic identity in higher education?
3. Currently, what are the De La Salle Christian Brothers' personal experiences of Catholic identity in higher education?
4. With regard to the future, how do De La Salle Christian Brothers envision Catholic identity in higher education?

The researcher asked a series of interview questions to answer each of the research questions. The main characteristics to emerge from the findings for research question #1 included the Catholic ethos, that is, how the Brothers understood the Roman Catholic Church; the mission of the institution; the presence of religious on the campus; the availability of the sacraments; and, how the institution reflected the values found in the Gospel. The second research question, seeking to capture the Brothers' personal experiences of Catholic identity from an historical perspective, identified the on-campus experience of the Christian Brothers, the Catholic institutional ethos, and the Catholic dimension integrated into the curriculum, as the common experiences for the Brothers at their initial assignment.

When responding to the third research question, the Brother's experience of Catholic identity was linked with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and the

outcomes from the Second Vatican Council. At their institutions, the mere fact that they were a Christian Brother identified the institution as Catholic and Lasallian. Additionally, the committed faculty and staff, no matter what their religious affiliation, who participated in programs in the Catholic and Lasallian tradition, animated the Catholic identity for the Brothers at their current institution. The two major characteristics from the findings from the interview questions related to the final interview question were the institutional mission and the institutional demographics. In regard to the institutional mission, the Brothers envisioned a Lasallian institution in the future as one that was in harmony with the Roman Catholic Church but relied on a lay leadership. Finally, the development and implementation of formation programs in the Catholic and Lasallian tradition, as well as the importance of hiring for institutional mission, were themes that were evident in the Brothers responses.

Conclusions

The researcher identified five major conclusions from the study. The first conclusion was that the Brothers experienced themselves as the animators of Catholic identity at the institutions of higher education that they were assigned. The participants in this study believed that they, as Christian Brothers, promoted the Catholic identity at their institutions. Some Brothers stated that, due to the decreasing numbers of Brothers and other religious, lay men and women had a responsibility to understand and promote the Catholic identity. Several participants perceived that it was important to have Brothers teach and be present in the institution. The Brothers responded that the initiation and ongoing facilitation of the integration of the Catholic identity in the institutional mission,

as well as a belief in the importance of the presence of the Christian Brothers, personified the experience of Catholic identity.

Scholars have confirmed that relationships between colleges and universities and sponsoring congregations have been mutually beneficial (Heft, 2003; Morey, 1995, 2002). Furthermore, the legacy of many religious congregations has contributed positively to the Catholic identity and culture of many higher education institutions (Devlin, 1998; Dodge, 1991; Introcaso, 1996; Neylon, 1996; Salvaterra, 1991). At the same time, there has been a significant decline in the numbers of religious men and women serving in higher education. Holtschneider and Morey (2000) and Morey and Piderit (2006) conjectured that it is unrealistic to expect that the heritage of the sponsoring congregations will be able to sustain Catholic identity into the future.

In contrast, the research of this study concurred with scholars who support the value of maintaining connections with religious sponsors (Heft, 2003; Morey, 1995, 2002). There is something within the human spirit that connects at a profound level with stories. The stories and the spirit of founders help to form the culture of educational institutions. Moreover, the charisms of the religious founders, which are gifts to be used for the good of the larger community, may well contribute to the unique spirit and identity of each institution.

The second conclusion emphasized the need and desire for education in the Catholic and Lasallian traditions. Understanding these traditions and incorporating them into the faculty's discipline or the staff's work can be a challenge due to the day-to-day responsibilities of each group. At the same time, the participants consistently mentioned the value of educational formation opportunities. According to Gleason (1995), educators

in Catholic colleges and universities desire to promote Catholic identity, but they are not sure what being Catholic means in an academic setting. O'Brien (1994, 1997) claimed that theoretical conversations leave faculty without concrete methods to integrate the Catholic tradition. The claims of these writers matched the problems that participants shared with this researcher. The Brothers spoke of faculty and staff who genuinely wished to integrate the Catholic identity into their work but the formation programs needed to be created or bolstered for this purpose. It is unrealistic for Lasallian colleges and universities to look to the Christian Brothers for additional faculty, staff, and administrators to carry out the Catholic identity of their institutions.

In institutions where Catholic identity is most powerfully animated, the participants noted that the spirit and tradition of the founder is understood by those associated with the institution and is highly regarded as a critical part of the institutional identity. For example, an institution may be described as being in the "Lasallian" tradition or as "founded by the Christian Brothers." Rooting the Catholic identity in the tradition of the founder has interesting consequences. Perhaps the most significant is that positive feelings about the founding congregation masks faculty and staff's negative feelings about the Church and makes the Catholic identity more palatable to those who have problems with Church authority.

The third conclusion of this study was that where Catholic identity is strong, the rituals and practices of the Catholic faith are also a vital part of the religious life of the campus. The Mass is celebrated often and is discussed as the center of this religious aspect of the institution. Special occasions, such as the opening of the academic year, include celebration of the Mass. The actual expression of the Catholic faith through the

celebration of the sacraments transcends the debate over issues of Church authority and interference in the institution. While the Brothers did not agree on all issues of Catholic identity, the centrality of the Eucharist and the core elements of Catholic beliefs continue to be a common ground. The relationship with the Roman Catholic Church was part of the experience of Catholic identity by the Brother participants. It was evident in their discussions of the Catholic intellectual tradition and in the Church's call to social justice and service. The Church has served as a reference point for the Catholic identity of the institutions in which the Brothers were assigned.

Another conclusion from the research was that there are aspects of the operations of the institution that reflect a connection to Catholicism, including the Catholic composition of the student body and faculty in terms of religious affiliation, the integration of the curriculum within the Catholic intellectual tradition, and programs that support the Catholic faith tradition. One of the most important elements that emerged from the study was the presence of a critical mass of Catholics on campus or those supportive of the Catholic tradition. According to the participants, the only way in which the Catholic identity may be sustained is with enough faculty and staff who understand the tradition and actively work to promote it. This does not mean that a certain percentage of the faculty and staff must be Catholic; rather, institutions need to insure, specifically in hiring, that there is a critical mass of faculty and staff who understand and support the Catholic identity.

The final conclusion that the research revealed was that presidential leadership is important for the Catholic identity of the institution. The president is vital to the clarification and articulation of an institution's Catholic identity. The Brothers indicated

that there was little difference between lay and Brother presidential leadership in terms of Catholic identity of the institution. The difference lies in the intentionality, that is, by necessity, lay presidents make the articulation of the Catholic identity more deliberate. What may formerly have been taken for granted with a Brother president must now be voiced.

Implications

An implication of this research is that there is not one experience that captured the Catholic identity in higher education for the Brothers. This research revealed that relationships are key to maintaining an institution's Catholic identity. The relationship between the institution of higher education and the founding religious congregation is critical and requires on-going attention by both groups. It is incumbent upon the leadership of both groups to develop ways to ensure that communication is substantive and that ways to engage in collaborative efforts are imagined to advance the mission.

The relationship between Catholic institutions of higher education and the Roman Catholic Church was important to the issue of Catholic identity. The relationship with the Church was necessary and the participants noted that the relationship must change from one of respectful distance and cordiality to one of intentional collaboration and dialogue. However, many Brothers perceived their experience with the Roman Catholic Church as strained, demonstrating both liberal and conservative views of Catholicism in their responses. Both agreed that the Gospel values are central to the Catholic identity in a Lasallian institution of higher education.

Catholic institutions of higher education need to insure that there is a critical mass of faculty and staff who support the Catholic tradition in higher education at each

institution that is committed to maintaining a Catholic identity. The desire for inclusiveness and pluralism cannot override the importance of a common commitment to the values of Catholic higher education. The hiring process, specifically for new faculty, staff, particularly those in the Human Resources and Admissions offices, and Board of Trustees members, must include discussions about the history, about the founder, and about the importance of the Catholic identity now and in the future.

Recommendations

Based on the results of this study, the following represents recommendations for future research and practice.

Recommendations for Future Research

1. There is a need to expand this study beyond the present cohort of institutions. The researcher recommends that the Brothers in the District of Eastern North America participate in a similar study to add their voices to those of their colleagues assigned to institutions of higher education in the United States.
2. This study focused on institutions of higher education sponsored by the De La Salle Christian Brothers. With a diminishing and aging population of religious men and women, other religious congregations may replicate this study to capture the voices of their members. It would be of interest to determine the degree of similarity and difference in the nature of Catholic identity the other religious congregations have experienced.
3. This study included Christian Brothers currently assigned to institutions of higher education in the United States. With the larger number of Brothers assigned to

secondary schools, it would be important to capture their voices in regard to Catholic identity before their voices are lost.

Recommendations for Future Practice

National Level

The Christian Brothers Conference (CBC) is the office for the Lasallian Region of North America of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. The CBC provides programming and support for Lasallian educators throughout the Region's five Districts—Francophone Canada, Eastern North America, the Midwest, New Orleans-Santa Fe and San Francisco. These following recommendations are directed to the CBC.

1. That the CBC develop metrics to be used at Lasallian colleges and universities that would assess the Catholic identity at each institution. These metrics would provide a baseline for each school's Catholic and Lasallian traditions that could be shared among the other Lasallian schools both in the United States and internationally.
2. That the CBC develop on-site training programs in Lasallian institutions of higher education that would offer ongoing professional development opportunities in Catholic identity for faculty and staff. All too often the programs that are offered are done so primarily at the beginning of the school year with little or no follow-up. In view of the declining number of Christian Brothers on staff in Lasallian colleges and universities in the United States, there is a need of more training and follow-up in the methodology for lay colleagues throughout the year and the adoption of Lasallian spirituality for the educator.

3. That the CBC promote scholarly research in the area of Catholic identity through the development of a sabbatical or exchange program whereby faculty may work at another Lasallian institution for a semester or an academic year.

Local Level

1. That Lasallian institutions of higher education prepare for the diminishing role and presence of the Christian Brothers by developing and implementing formation programs for future leadership of the institution.
2. That Lasallian institutions of higher education commit resources to the formation programs, speakers, seminars, and events that foster and enhance the Catholic identity of the institution.
3. That Lasallian institutions of higher education establish a speaker series that focuses on Catholic identity in higher education.
4. That Lasallian institutions of higher education establish an Office of Mission to promote and enhance the Catholic identity and Lasallian traditions of the institution.

Closing Remarks

The deep respect and concern about the future of Lasallian institutions without the presence of the De La Salle Christian Brothers was a fundamental reason for this study. Having been associated with the Brothers for almost all of his adult life, the researcher has had the unique opportunity to live, work, eat, travel, study, and pray with Brothers both in the New York (now part of the District of Eastern North America) and San Francisco Districts. They have welcomed the researcher into their lives and this relationship gave genesis to the idea of this research study. Too many times in his private

and professional life, the researcher heard that the “Brothers did this,” or the “Brothers think this.” Well, this is not the case. The Brothers are individual men. There is not a collective thought and the Brothers are not one being, they are many. From his many personal experiences with Brothers, it is the divergence in their thoughts and opinions that the researcher has enjoyed and wished to capture in this research.

Each Brother is as unique as each member of a family is unique. There is only one overriding and universal common trait among the Brothers and that is their desire to educate the students entrusted to their care. Besides that, the Brothers are individuals and their experiences are their own, not a prescribed formula to which all Brothers must conform. The results of this research study clearly showed this to be true and evident. While common characteristics and experiences emerged from the data, not all Brothers were alike in their responses. This is precisely what the researcher hoped to achieve. He envisioned responses that did not bow to the Church authority and instead spoke from the hearts of the participants. These are the responses included in this study.

This was a personal journey for both the researcher and the Brothers. More than one Brother thanked the researcher for asking the questions, seeking their experiences, and hearing their voice. They shared that it was great opportunity to reflect on their life and how their life was intertwined in the mission and Catholic identity of the institutions they were assigned. Several also commented that they were sure that their fellow Brothers would not favorably receive their answers but this did not stop them from sharing their experiences. When the researcher visited the institutions before the research study commenced in order to introduce himself and to seek their participation, he was welcomed into their homes as one of their own. He was not an outsider seeking to expose

radical thinking, but rather was there to seek their honest and unique experiences of Catholic identity. This initial relationship building and introduction, in the researcher's view, provided for the richness of the data received.

The researcher was genuinely surprised that not one Brother answered any of the interview questions espousing or quoting *Ex Corde Ecclesia* or any other Church document. While it was clear that some Brothers had a clear view of the role of the Roman Catholic Church in the Catholic identity of their institution, they did not quote Church documents to support their views. Rather, their responses came from their personal experiences and interpretative view of the Church and how this was animated in the school that they were assigned. To the researcher, this validated the purpose of the study, which was to capture the experiences of the Brothers, as opposed to having a repetitive quoting of Church documents that may or may not have been the views of the individual Brothers. This supported that it was not merely an academic exercise, but that the responses were from the heart.

The researcher hopes that the voices of the Brothers will be listened to, not buried as some old artifact of the way things were in the past. The richness of their experiences are treasures which need to be cherished and respected by all members of the campus community. Their way of life and the charism of the Founder who they imitate may enrich, empower, and enlighten future Lasallian educators as they learn from and teach one another. In this way, the Lasallian educators who receive and experience the treasures found in the experiences of the Brothers will carry out and live the treasure into the future.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

LETTER TO BROTHER VISITOR SEEKING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT
RESEARCH WITH CHRISTIAN BROTHERS IN THEIR DISTRICT

SCOTT A. KIER
 PO Box 3945
 Moraga, California 94575
 925.948.5355
 scottkier@gmail.com

[DATE]

Brother [VISITOR_FNAME] [VISITOR_LNAME], FSC
 Visitor, [DISTRICT]
 [ADDRESS]
 [CITY], [STATE] [ZIP]

Dear Brother [VISITOR_FNAME],

I am the Dean of Students at Saint Mary's College of California and a doctoral student in the Department of Catholic Educational Leadership in the School of Education at the University of San Francisco. I am also a graduate of St. Joseph's Collegiate Institute in Buffalo, NY, and have worked at St. Joseph's as well as De La Salle Collegiate in Warren, MI.

This letter is a formal request to conduct interviews for my dissertation study on the De La Salle Christian Brothers' personal experience of Catholic identity at their institution of higher education in the United States. Specifically, I am researching the Brothers' personal characterizations of Catholic identity, their historical and current personal experiences in regard to Catholic identity, as well as the opportunity to envision the future of Catholic identity at their institution.

I propose to conduct this qualitative research with the Christian Brothers assigned at each of the six Lasallian colleges and universities in the United States using on-line blogs in the spring of 2012. Utilizing an on-line blog, more Brothers will be able to participate in this research as opposed to conducting a random sample of Brothers from a sample of the US colleges and universities. The purpose of this study is not an evaluation or an assessment of the Catholic identity at a specific institution. Rather, this research will allow the Christian Brothers to share their personal experience(s) of Catholic identity at their institution.

This study adds to the body of research regarding Catholic identity and specifically gives voice to the personal experiences of the Christian Brothers regarding their experience of Catholic identity. I have spoken with Brother Robert Schieler, FSC, General Councilor, and he has endorsed this proposed study. I promise confidentiality of all participants and of each Lasallian college and university when reporting my results.

Your permission to conduct this study would be most appreciated. Would you kindly sign below and return this letter by [DUE_DATE] in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope? If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at your earliest convenience via email at scottkier@gmail.com or cell phone 925.948.5355.

Thank you in advance for considering this request for the participation of the Christian Brothers from the [DISTRICT] in this dissertation study.

Sincerely,

Scott Kier

Approval:

Date

Brother [VISITOR_FNAME] [VISITOR_LNAME], FSC
Visitor, [DISTRICT]

APPENDIX B

SIGNED LETTERS FROM BROTHER VISITOR GRANTING PERMISSION TO
CONDUCT RESEARCH WITH CHRISTIAN BROTHERS IN THEIR DISTRICT

SCOTT A. KIER
 PO Box 3945
 Moraga, California 94575
 925.948.5355
 scottkier@gmail.com

November 9, 2011

Brother Donald Johanson, FSC
 Visitor, San Francisco District
 4401 Redwood Road
 PO Box 3720
 Napa, CA 94558-9708

Dear Brother Donald,

I am the Dean of Students at Saint Mary's College of California and a doctoral student in the Department of Catholic Educational Leadership in the School of Education at the University of San Francisco. I am also a graduate of St. Joseph's Collegiate Institute in Buffalo, NY, and have worked at St. Joseph's as well as De La Salle Collegiate in Warren, MI.

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Your permission to conduct this study would be most appreciated. Would you kindly sign below and return this letter by November 25, 2011 in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope? If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at your earliest convenience via email at scottkier@gmail.com or cell phone 925.948.5355.

Thank you in advance for considering this request for the participation of the Christian Brothers from the San Francisco District in this dissertation study.

Sincerely,



Scott Kier


Approval: Brother Donald Johanson, FSC
Visitor
San Francisco District

11/11/11
Date

SCOTT A. KIER
 PO Box 3945
 Moraga, California 94575
 925.948.5355
 scottkier@gmail.com

November 9, 2011

Brother Larry Schatz, FSC
 Visitor, Midwest District
 7650 S County Line Road
 Burr Ridge, IL 60527-7959

Dear Brother Larry,

I am the Dean of Students at Saint Mary's College of California and a doctoral student in the Department of Catholic Educational Leadership in the School of Education at the University of San Francisco. I am also a graduate of St. Joseph's Collegiate Institute in Buffalo, NY, and have worked at St. Joseph's as well as De La Salle Collegiate in Warren, MI.

This letter is a formal request to conduct interviews for my dissertation study on the De La Salle Christian Brothers' personal experience of Catholic identity at their institution of higher education in the United States. Specifically, I am researching the Brothers' personal characterizations of Catholic identity, their historical and current personal experiences in regard to Catholic identity, as well as the opportunity to envision the future of Catholic identity at their institution.

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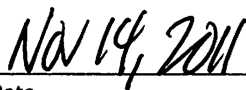
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Thank you in advance for considering this request for the participation of the Christian Brothers from the Midwest District in this dissertation study.

Sincerely,


Scott Kier


Approval: Brother Larry Schatz, FSC
Visitor
Midwest District


Date

SCOTT A. KIER
 PO Box 3945
 Moraga, California 94575
 925.948.5355
 scottkier@gmail.com

November 9, 2011

Brother Timothy Coldwell, FSC
 Visitor, New Orleans - Santa Fe District
 1522 Carmel Drive
 Lafayette, LA 70501

Dear Brother Timothy,

I am the Dean of Students at Saint Mary's College of California and a doctoral student in the Department of Catholic Educational Leadership in the School of Education at the University of San Francisco. I am also a graduate of St. Joseph's Collegiate Institute in Buffalo, NY, and have worked at St. Joseph's as well as De La Salle Collegiate in Warren, MI.

This letter is a formal request to conduct interviews for my dissertation study on the De La Salle Christian Brothers' personal experience of Catholic identity at their institution of higher education in the United States. Specifically, I am researching the Brothers' personal characterizations of Catholic identity, their historical and current personal experiences in regard to Catholic identity, as well as the opportunity to envision the future of Catholic identity at their institution.

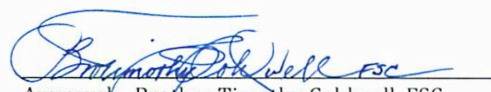
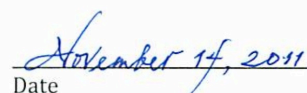
I propose to conduct this qualitative research with the Christian Brothers assigned at each of the six Lasallian colleges and universities in the United States using on-line blogs in the spring of 2012. Utilizing an on-line blog, more Brothers will be able to participate in this research as opposed to conducting a random sample of Brothers from a sample of the US colleges and universities. The purpose of this study is not an evaluation or an assessment of the Catholic identity at a specific institution. Rather, this research will allow the Christian Brothers to share their personal experience(s) of Catholic identity at their institution.

This study adds to the body of research regarding Catholic identity and specifically gives voice to the personal experiences of the Christian Brothers regarding their experience of Catholic identity. I have spoken with Brother Robert Schieler, FSC, General Councilor, and he has endorsed this proposed study. I promise confidentiality of all participants and of each Lasallian college and university when reporting my results.

Your permission to conduct this study would be most appreciated. Would you kindly sign below and return this letter by November 25, 2011 in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope? If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at your earliest convenience via email at scottkier@gmail.com or cell phone 925.948.5355.

Thank you in advance for considering this request for the participation of the Christian Brothers from the New Orleans - Santa Fe District in this dissertation study.

Sincerely,


Scott Kier
Approval: Brother Timothy Coldwell, FSC
Visitor
New Orleans - Santa Fe District
Date

APPENDIX C

EMAIL TO THE BROTHER DIRECTOR INTRODUCING RESEARCHER AND
SEEKING MEETING WITH BROTHER'S COMMUNITY

[DATE]

Dear Brother [FNAME],

I am the Dean of Students at Saint Mary's College of California and a doctoral student in the Catholic Educational Leadership Program in the School of Education at the University of San Francisco. I am also a graduate of St. Joseph's Collegiate Institute in Buffalo, NY, and have worked at St. Joseph's, as well as at De La Salle Collegiate in Warren, MI.

I have received permission from Brother [VISITOR_FNAME], Visitor for [DISTRICT], to conduct interviews for my dissertation study on the De La Salle Christian Brothers' personal experience of Catholic identity at their institution of higher education in the United States. Specifically, I am researching the Brothers' personal characterizations of Catholic identity, their historical and current personal experiences of Catholic identity, and their envisioning of the future of Catholic identity in higher education.

Utilizing an on-line blog, I will be conducting my research with the Brothers currently assigned to institutions of higher education in the United States. The purpose of this study is not an evaluation or an assessment of the Catholic identity at a specific institution. Rather, this research will allow the Christian Brothers to share their personal experience(s) of Catholic identity in higher education.

This study will add to the body of research regarding Catholic identity and specifically gives voice to the personal experiences of the Christian Brothers regarding their experience of Catholic identity. I have spoken with Brother Robert Schieler, FSC, General Councilor, and he has endorsed this proposed study. I promise confidentiality of all participants and of each Lasallian college and university when reporting my results.

I would like to visit your community and introduce myself to you and the Brothers. Research has shown that creating a rapport with the participants encourages active participation, as opposed to only receiving an email inviting participation. When I meet with the community, I will share the purpose of my study, review the online blog, and answer any questions. Additionally, I will provide each Brother who agrees to participate in the study with an Informed Consent Form. I envision my visit to occur in mid-April, shortly before the commencement of the study.

If you are agreeable to this initial meeting, please contact me at your earliest convenience via email at scottkier@gmail.com or cell phone 925.948.5355 and we can confirm a date and time.

Thank you in advance for considering this request.

Sincerely,
Scott Kier

APPENDIX D

CONSENT FORM TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

CONSENT TO BE A RESEARCH SUBJECT

Purpose and Background

Scott Kier, a doctoral student in the School of Education at the University of San Francisco, is conducting a study on the experiences of Catholic identity by De La Salle Christian Brothers in higher education. The research is being conducted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at the University of San Francisco.

An important segment of American higher education, Catholic colleges and universities, will benefit from understanding the experiences of the sponsoring religious congregation in regard to Catholic identity. Generally, many in Catholic higher education believe that their institutions are quickly becoming secularized, losing their sense of a Catholic or religious order identity. If this is true and if the trend continues, an important segment of higher education, the voices of the sponsoring religious congregation, may be lost forever.

I am being asked to participate because I am De La Salle Christian Brother who is assigned to an institution of higher education. At the institution, I hold or have held one of the following positions: (a) administration, (b) faculty, or (c) staff.

Procedures

If I agree to be a participant in this study, I will be given the Internet address where the online blog can be found. The researcher will post interview questions every week and I will have the opportunity to respond to the questions at any time during the week. The researcher may ask a follow-up question or questions to seek additional clarification. The answers I provide will be viewed only by myself and the researcher.

Risks and/or Discomforts

It is possible that some of the questions asked on the blog may make me feel uncomfortable, but I am free to decline to answer any questions I do not wish to answer or to stop participation at any time. The researcher will do what he can to minimize the possibility of such.

Benefits

There will be no direct benefit to me from participating in this study. An anticipated benefit of this study is a better understanding of the experiences of Catholic identity by the Christian Brothers in higher education. My participation in this study allows me to know that I have made an important contribution to both the research on Catholic identity in higher education, as well as preserving the experiences of the Christian Brothers.

Confidentiality

My participation in research may mean of loss of confidentiality. All records of the study will be kept as confidential as possible. No individual identities will be used in any reports of

publications resulting from this study. Only the researcher will have direct access to the online blog and the researcher may be required to share research information with his dissertation committee prior to the completion of his dissertation. At the completion of the study and writing of the findings, the online blog will be deleted. All digital files will be secured in a password-protected computer hard-drive; all paper documents, including the researcher's copy of this informed consent form, will be kept in a secure file cabinet.

Voluntary Participation

My participation in this study is voluntary. I am free to decide to participate in this study, or even to withdraw from it up to the conclusion of the last interview question.

Costs/Financial Considerations

The time I spend answering the interview questions on the online blog, of approximately 1-2 hours total, will be a cost to me. There will be no financial costs to me as a result of taking part in this study.

Payment/Reimbursement

I understand there will be no formal reimbursement for participation in this study.

Questions

I have talked to Scott Kier about this study and have had my questions answered. If I have further questions about the study, I may call him at (925) 948-5355. If I have any questions or comments about participation in this study, I should first talk with the researcher. If for some reason I do not wish to do this, I may contact the IRBPHS, which is concerned with protection of volunteers in research projects. I may reach the IRBPHS office by calling (415) 422-6091 and leaving a voicemail message, by e-mailing IRBPHS@usfca.edu, or by writing to the IRBPHS, Department of Psychology, University of San Francisco, 2130 Fulton Street, San Francisco, CA 94117-1080.

Contact Information

The email address to send the link for the online blog is: _____

Consent

I have read the above information, and I have been given a copy of this consent form to keep.

My signature below indicates that I agree to participate in this study.

Subject's Signature

Date of Signature

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent

Date of Signature

APPENDIX E

CONTACT FORM FOR PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION FORM

Personal Experiences of Catholic Identity

This form does not serve in any way as a Consent Form for your participation

Name: _____

Email: _____

Most recent position at the college/university (*check only one*):

- ☐ Administration (*includes President, Vice Presidents, Deans of Students, and other Cabinet level positions*)
- ☐ Faculty (*full- or part-time*)
- ☐ Staff (*needing an advanced degree to hold the position*)

Are you currently retired? [] Yes [] No

Number of years as a Christian Brother: _____

Number of years assigned to an institution of higher education: _____

Number of institutions of higher education you have been assigned to: _____

Have you ever been assigned to a secondary school? [] Yes [] No

If yes, numbers of years assigned to a secondary school: _____

Researcher use only

username: _____

password: _____

APPENDIX F

EMAIL TO THE CHRISTIAN BROTHER INVITING
PARTICIPATION IN THE RESEARCH STUDY

[DATE]

Brother [FNAME] [LNAME]
[ADDRESS]
[CITY], [STATE] [ZIP]

Dear Brother [FNAME]:

My name is Scott Kier and I am a graduate student in the Catholic Education Leadership Program in the School of Education at the University of San Francisco. I am conducting a study on the experiences of Christian Brothers regarding Catholic identity in higher education. I am interested in learning how Catholic identity is defined by the Brothers, what have been their personal experiences of Catholic identity in higher education in the past, how it they experience it today, and how they envision it in the future. I have the permission of Brother [VISITOR_FNAME] [VISITOR_LNAME], Visitor of [DISTRICT], to conduct this research in your District.

You are invited to participate in this research study because you are a De La Salle Christian Brother assigned to a college or university sponsored by the Christian Brothers and hold one of the following positions: (a) administration, (b) faculty, or (c) staff. If you agree to participate in this study, you will be given the Internet address where the online blog may be found.

You are free to decline to answer any question on the blog that may make you feel uncomfortable, or to stop participation at any time. The interview questions will be posted on the blog on a weekly basis over a three week period and you may answer the questions at any time during the week. The individual responses to the interview questions will remain confidential and will only be known to the researcher. No individual identities will be used in any reports or publications. Upon the conclusion of the research, the online blog will be deleted.

While there will be no direct benefit to you from participating in this study, the anticipated benefit of this study is a better understanding of the experiences of the Christian Brothers related to Catholic identity in higher education. There will be no costs to you as a result of taking part in this study, nor will you be reimbursed for your participation in this study.

If you have questions about the research, you may contact me at (925) 948-5355. If you have further questions about the study, you may contact the IRBPHS at the University of San Francisco, which is concerned with protection of volunteers in research projects. You may reach the IRBPHS office by calling (415) 422-6091 and leaving a voicemail message, by e-mailing IRBPHS@usfca.edu, or by writing to the IRBPHS, Counseling Psychology Department, University of San Francisco, 2130 Fulton Street, San Francisco, CA 94117-1071.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and you are free to decide to participate in this study, or even to withdraw from it, up to the conclusion of the last interview question. The Brother Visitor is aware of and endorses this study; he does not require that you participate in this research and it is your decision as to whether or not to participate.

Thank you for considering to participate in this research study.

Sincerely,

Scott Kier
Doctoral Student
University of San Francisco

APPENDIX G

THANK YOU EMAIL TO THE CHRISTIAN BROTHER
PARTICIPATING IN THE RESEARCH STUDY

[DATE]

Dear Brother,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my research study examining the experiences of the De La Salle Christian Brothers in regard to Catholic identity in higher education. I appreciate your willingness to share with me your personal experiences of Catholic identity.

As indicated, this qualitative research will be conducted utilizing an online blog. The blog may be found at www.kier-research.com (click on link or copy and paste into your web browser). I would encourage you to visit the online blog as soon as possible to make certain that the link works and you are able to access the blog. Please email me at scottkier@gmail.com or contact me at 925.948.5355 if you experience any problems.

To access the blog, please use your unique username and password:

Username: [PSEUDONYM]

Password: [PASSWORD]

The initial set of interview questions will be posted on [START_DATE] and I will send you a reminder email after the interview questions have been posted.

Thank you again and should you have any questions, please feel free to email at scottkier@gmail.com or call me at 925.948.5355.

Sincerely,

Scott

APPENDIX H
LETTER OF APPROVAL FROM IRBPHS



Scott Kier <scottkier@gmail.com>

IRB Application #12-029 - Approved

USF IRBPHS <irbphs@usfca.edu>

Mon, Mar 26, 2012 at 12:29 PM

To: scottkier@gmail.com

Cc: shimabukurog@usfca.edu

March 26, 2012

Dear Mr. Kier:

The Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRBPHS) at the University of San Francisco (USF) has reviewed your request for human subjects approval regarding your study.

Your application has been approved by the committee (IRBPHS #12-029). Please note the following:

1. Approval expires twelve (12) months from the dated noted above. At that time, if you are still in collecting data from human subjects, you must file a renewal application.
2. Any modifications to the research protocol or changes in instrumentation (including wording of items) must be communicated to the IRBPHS. Re-submission of an application may be required at that time.
3. Any adverse reactions or complications on the part of participants must be reported (in writing) to the IRBPHS within ten (10) working days.

If you have any questions, please contact the IRBPHS at [\(415\) 422-6091](tel:(415)422-6091).

On behalf of the IRBPHS committee, I wish you much success in your research.

Sincerely,

Terence Patterson, EdD, ABPP
Chair, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects

IRBPHS – University of San Francisco
Counseling Psychology Department
Education Building – Room 017
2130 Fulton Street
San Francisco, CA 94117-1080
[\(415\) 422-6091](tel:(415)422-6091) (Message)
[\(415\) 422-5528](tel:(415)422-5528) (Fax)
irbphs@usfca.edu

<http://www.usfca.edu/soe/students/irbphs/>

APPENDIX I

EMAIL TO THE CHRISTIAN BROTHER ANNOUNCING
POSTING OF INITIAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

[DATE]

Dear Brother,

The initial set of interview questions have been posted to the online blog. The blog may be found at www.kier-research.com (click on link or copy and paste into your web browser).

Interview question responses are accessible only to you, the participant, and me, the researcher. Other participants do not have access to your entries.

To access the blog, please use your unique username and password:

Username: [PSEUDONYM]

Password: [PASSWORD]

Reminder: your participation in this study is voluntary and you are free to decide to participate in this study, or even to withdraw from it, up to the conclusion of the last interview question. The Brother Visitor is aware of and endorses this study, but he does not require that you participate in this research and it is your decision as to whether or not to participate.

Should you have problems accessing the blog and wish to cease participation, please email at scottkier@gmail.com or contact me at 925.948.5355.

Sincerely,

Scott

APPENDIX J

EMAIL TO THE CHRISTIAN BROTHER INDICATING DISCONTINUED USE
ON ONLINE BLOG AND PROVIDING INITIAL SET
OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR RESPONSE

Dear Brother,

Thank you again for agreeing to participate in my doctoral dissertation research in which I am examining the experiences of the Christian Brothers' in regard to Catholic identity in higher education in the United States. I appreciate your willingness to share with me your personal experiences.

I have experienced some unexpected problems with the online blog created for the posting and responding to the interview questions. In its present capacity, I have not been able to maintain the confidentiality of you, the participant, while answering the questions. Since your confidentiality is very important to me, I have decided to send the initial set of questions along via this email as I work out the problems with the online blog.

The following are the initial set of questions:

1. Please describe what Catholic identity in higher education means to you.
2. As a Christian Brother, when you were first assigned to an institution of higher education, what was your experience of Catholic identity?
3. As a Christian Brother, when you were first assigned to an institution of higher education, did your institution meet your description of Catholic identity? If so, how did it meet your expectations? If it did not, how did it not meet your expectations?
4. Please share a personal story that captures your experience of Catholic identity when you were first assigned to an institution of higher education as a Christian Brother.

Within the next seven days, please respond to these questions via return email. Your answers will be accessible to only you, the participant, and me, the researcher. For your planning, the next set of interview questions will be sent to you on May 7, 2012 and the final set will be sent on May 14, 2012.

Reminder, your participation in this study is voluntary and you are free to decide to participate in this study, or even to withdraw from it, up to the conclusion of the last interview question. The Brother Visitor is aware of and endorses this study, but he does not require that you participate in this research and it is your decision as to whether or not to participate. Please email me if you wish to cease participation in this research.

Sincerely,
Scott

APPENDIX K

EMAIL TO THE CHRISTIAN BROTHER REMINDING
OF INITIAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Dear Brother,

A reminder, if you haven't submitted responses to the initial set of interview questions, I have included them below. I appreciate your taking the time to answer these questions as I look forward to documenting the voice of the Christian Brothers on this topic.

On Monday evening, I will send the second set of interview questions.

Thank you again for your participation in my doctoral research study.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to email me or call me at 925.948.5355.

Sincerely,
Scott

APPENDIX L

EMAIL TO THE CHRISTIAN BROTHER CONTAINING
SECOND SET OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Dear Brother,

Thank you again for participating in my doctoral research study on the De La Salle Christian Brothers' experiences of Catholic identity in higher education. Today commences the second of the three weeks of the research study with the posting of the second set of interview questions.

The following are the second set of questions:

1. Today, what is your experience of Catholic identity in higher education?
2. Since you began your service in higher education, how, if at all, has your experience of Catholic identity changed?
3. From your experience, what is the greatest contribution being made to strengthen the Catholic identity in higher education?
4. Please share a personal story that captures your experience of Catholic identity today in higher education.

Within the next seven days, please respond to these questions via return email. Your answers will be accessible to only you, the participant, and me, the researcher. For your planning, the next and final set of interview questions will be sent on May 14, 2012.

Reminder, your participation in this study is voluntary and you are free to decide to participate in this study, or even to withdraw from it, up to the conclusion of the last interview question. The Brother Visitor is aware of and endorses this study, but he does not require that you participate in this research and it is your decision as to whether or not to participate. Please email me if you wish to cease participation in this research.

Sincerely,
Scott

APPENDIX M

EMAIL TO THE CHRISTIAN BROTHER REMINDING
OF SECOND SET OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Dear Brother,

A reminder, if you haven't submitted responses to the second set of interview questions, I have included them below. I appreciate your taking the time to answer these questions as I look forward to documenting the voice of the Christian Brothers on this topic.

On Monday evening, I will send the third and final set of interview questions.

Thank you again for your participation in my doctoral research study.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to email me or call me at 925.948.5355.

Sincerely,
Scott

APPENDIX N

EMAIL TO THE CHRISTIAN BROTHER CONTAINING
FINAL SET OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Dear Brother,

Thank you again for participating in my doctoral research study on the De La Salle Christian Brothers' experiences of Catholic identity in higher education. Today commences the final week of the research study with the posting of the third set of interview questions.

The following are the third set of questions:

- 1a. In higher education, what will Catholic identity look like in 5 years?
- 1b. In higher education, what will Catholic identity look like in 10 years?
- 1c. In higher education, what will Catholic identity look like in 20 years?
- 2. What do you see as the greatest challenge facing higher education in regard to Catholic identity?

Within the next seven days, please respond to these questions via return email. Your answers will be accessible to only you, the participant, and me, the researcher. I would appreciate your answering these questions by midnight on Tuesday, May 22, 2012.

Reminder, your participation in this study is voluntary and you are free to decide to participate in this study, or even to withdraw from it, up to the conclusion of the last interview question. The Brother Visitor is aware of and endorses this study, but he does not require that you participate in this research and it is your decision as to whether or not to participate. Please email me if you wish to cease participation in this research.

Sincerely,
Scott

APPENDIX O

EMAIL TO THE CHRISTIAN BROTHER REMINDING
OF FINAL SET OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Dear Brother,

I wanted to remind you that I am wrapping up my research and wanted to give you the opportunity to submit your responses to the Week 3 questions (I have copied the questions below). I have been fortunate to have had 20 Brothers participate in the first two weeks and I would like to have the same number of respondents for the final week as well. I know these last two weeks have been busy with travel, meetings, exams, and commencement, but know that I would appreciate your responses if you can send along.

Please let me know if you will need some additional time to send along your responses to the week 3 questions (one Brother didn't respond to week 2 as well but I have also included those questions below -- I know this has been an extremely busy last two weeks and I would be interested in your responses!).

Thank you again!
Scott

The following are the third set of questions:

- 1a. In higher education, what will Catholic identity look like in 5 years?
- 1b. In higher education, what will Catholic identity look like in 10 years?
- 1c. In higher education, what will Catholic identity look like in 20 years?
2. What do you see as the greatest challenge facing higher education in regard to Catholic identity?

The following are the second set of questions:

1. Today, what is your experience of Catholic identity in higher education?
2. Since you began your service in higher education, how, if at all, has your experience of Catholic identity changed?
3. From your experience, what is the greatest contribution being made to strengthen the Catholic identity in higher education?
4. Please share a personal story that captures your experience of Catholic identity today in higher education.

APPENDIX P

EMAIL TO THE CHRISTIAN BROTHER ANNOUNCING
CLOSURE OF RESEARCH STUDY

Dear Brother,

On Tuesday, May 22, 2012, at midnight PST, I will be concluding my research. If you have not already done so, I would encourage you to respond to the questions prior to the closing of the study.

Reminder: Your participation in this study is voluntary and you are free to decide to participate in this study, or even to withdraw from it, up to the conclusion of the last interview question. The Brother Visitor is aware of and endorses this study, but he does not require that you participate in this research and it is your decision as to whether or not to participate.

Should you have any questions, please email or contact me at 925.948.5355.

Sincerely,

Scott

APPENDIX Q

EMAIL THANKING THE CHRISTIAN BROTHER FOR
PARTICIPATION IN THE RESEARCH STUDY

Dear Brother,

Thank you for participating in my research study examining your experiences of Catholic identity in higher education. I appreciate the sharing of your personal experiences and when completed, I would be happy to share electronically with you my findings.

If you would like to receive an electronic copy of the dissertation, please email at scottkier@gmail.com or contact me at 925.948.5355.

Again, thank you for your participation!

Sincerely,

Scott